









## Rape victim refuses to give in to fear

From Our Own Correspondent  
Rome, April 1

Signorina Claudia Caputi, who was attacked by youths with razors on Wednesday in an attempt to frighten her into silence, said today that she would continue to give evidence against a gang accused of raping her last August.

From her hospital bed, she asked that the trial of seven of the men charged with rape should be postponed so that she could give evidence against them in person.

Some 15,000 women took part in a march last night to express solidarity with her.

Signorina Caputi, aged 18, stated that she decided to face her attackers in court because she had received many threats, including threats of death.

The men who had attacked her two days ago, she said, had warned her that if she did not desist, she would be shot. She claimed that she recognized her attackers as part of the group which raped her last August.

The case is just beginning to be understood in its full seriousness by public opinion. The Italian public is more at home with crimes which can be given a political label.

The case of Signorina Caputi, however, has shined a new light on the problem of violence against women. Her attackers on both occasions were youths who are the product of the semi-slums and suburbs of Rome which have grown up as a result of the shift from the countryside to the cities in the post-war period. They belong to the first generation to be brought up in these surroundings.

These young people are blamed for a large part of the huge increase in violent crime in the city. Political violence has some recognizable motives, however warped. Mindless violence is quite different.

Political violence was planned for the death last night of a lady driver who went to rescue her son who was being held by a gang of youths said to be of the extreme left.

The young man, Enzo Giudici, belongs to the local section of the right-wing Italian Social Movement.

## British airliner in near miss with US fighter

Frankfurt, April 1—A British airliner in bad weather was narrowly avoided by a US fighter jet on Wednesday.

The Federal Air Safety Board reported that the incident happened about 25 miles north of Frankfurt as a Boeing 747 of the British Airways fleet from London was flying.

A spokesman said the incident happened about 25 miles north of Frankfurt as a Boeing 747 of the British Airways fleet from London was flying.

It was a near miss between a British airliner and a US fighter jet on Wednesday.

The pilot of the British airliner had not reported a near miss, the spokesman said, and an official US military spokesman said no report had been received there either.

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President Sadat and Herr Schmidt, the West German leader, in Bonn yesterday.

## Mr Sadat wins aid from Bonn

From Grotel Spitzer  
Bonn, April 1

West German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, has accepted an invitation to visit President Sadat after discussions this morning. He hoped the visit would take place in December.

Talking to the press after the talks, Herr Schmidt and President Sadat agreed that

1977 offered good chances for bringing about a lasting peace in the Middle East.

Resumption of the Geneva conference this year would offer an opportunity for the possibility to become reality, Herr Schmidt said.

He was careful not to commit himself on the role of the Palestinians at the conference, however. He believed that the Palestinians had to take part in the conference in one way or another.

President Sadat announced further German aid to Egypt. He did not disclose the sum, which is still subject to approval by the Bundestag, but it is an open secret that it amounts to DM250m (£82.5m), DM200m in cash and DM50m in goods. Some technical aid will also be added.

Referring to peace prospects, President Sadat said the lack of success of the visit to Moscow by Mr Vance, the American Secretary of State, could delay the solution of other problems such as the Middle East issue.

He was rather concerned about developments in the Mediterranean and Africa.

There were Mediterranean states such as Libya that made it easier for the Soviet Union to do what it wanted. In Egypt's opinion, the Mediterranean should be a sea of peace and Africa should be left in peace so that its people could determine their own future.

The mood of the majority remains morose and that of its Gaullist element sceptical and critical.

Most observers consider that an opportunity has been missed of striking the popular imagination by bringing into the Cabinet some prominent names with something of a public resonance, such as M. Chaban-Delmas, the former Prime Minister, and M. Jacques Bordereau, of whom there was some talk in recent weeks.

There are a number of bright names in the Government. The new Government's first objective was to pursue economic recovery. A special effort would, however, be made to deal with unemployment.

Replying to criticism that his new team was more serious than the old, M. Barre said that the Government's first objective was to pursue economic recovery. A special effort would, however, be made to deal with unemployment.

The government majority had suffered a setback in the recent elections because it had not renewed itself enough, he went on in politics as elsewhere.

There was a new assumption of government responsibility by young, dynamic and competent men will allow the changing of the guard necessary to ensure the majority's success.

However, the announcement of this evening of M. Barre's second team of junior ministers seems hardly likely to impress the public with the vision of a powerful and dynamic new administration, capable of winning the day in the coming year.

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## Washington says Mr Gromyko was 'inaccurate' in his denunciation of US proposals

From Patrick Brogan  
Washington, April 1

The American Government has decided to return it for ratification after the breakdown of the strategic arms limitation negotiations in Moscow.

Mr Zbigniew Brzezinski, the President's national security adviser, said this morning that Mr Gromyko, the Soviet Foreign Minister, had made inaccurate charges against the United States yesterday and insisted that the American proposals were reasonable and equitable.

President Carter said the details of what Mr Vance, the Secretary of State, proposed in Moscow. Mr Brzezinski said that the proposals would have capped the arms race, that Mr Gromyko had used "strong, inaccurate language" in denouncing them, and that the United States would not abandon its allies in Europe nor its policies on human rights in the Soviet Union.

Mr Brzezinski said the American side had not expected that the Russians would accept the proposals. They went much further than Vladivostok and "unlike previous proposals, really reduce weaponry on both sides".

It will take some time for the Soviet leaders to appreciate the mutual advantages of this proposal, he said.

In spite of their brave words, the American leaders know that they are facing a foreign affairs crisis. The President mounted a large-scale verbal attack on the Soviet Union for its violations of human rights and then refused to publish the outlines of the radical disarmament proposals he intended to submit.

They called, essentially, for the Russians to give up all their best weapons in exchange for an American promise not to develop new weapons which would be better than the Russian ones, but which are not yet ready for use.

The Russians have turned him down and have raised the question of American short-range missiles in Europe and their naval bases in Scotland and Spain.

Our Moscow Correspondent writes: The failure of Mr Vance's Moscow mission came as no surprise to American diplomats here. They had advised Mr Vance from the outset that his proposals on strategic arms limitation would be unacceptable.

Mr Carter gives up his yacht

From Our Own Correspondent  
Washington, April 1

President Carter has decided to give up one of the pleasant parts of his office, the Potomac River and presidents in the past have used it to escape the cares of office and to entertain their friends.

Mr Carter, who has handed the yacht to the Navy, deprived of a number of his assistants of their chauffeur-driven cars when he took office.

People such as Dr James Schlesinger, who is devising an energy policy, and Mr Jody Powell, the press secretary, drive themselves to work.

That the yacht which cost \$800,000 (£270,000) after a year, was used only twice by President Ford last year and twice in 1975, President Nixon used it 31 times in his last year in office.

Mr Partridge, the Prime Minister, a Minister of Combined Operations, a supreme military commander, and a Minister of Manpower, said today to the Ministers of Defence and Law and Order.

Mr Partridge had some difficulty in clarifying this complex division of responsibility.

He began the televised press conference with an attack on communism and said the Russians were inviting an atomic holocaust by their expansionism in Africa. Rhodesia's Marxist neighbours, he predicted, would decline in slavery and poverty while Rhodesia would "grow from strength to strength".

Mr Partridge, who took up the defence portfolio three weeks ago, was speaking at a press conference which appeared to be designed to bolster the Defence Ministry's dwindling ratings.

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## Guards beat off coup attempt in Chad

Ndjamena, Chad, April 1—

Security forces crushed an attempted coup against President Idriss Deby of Chad here today, a battle outside the presidential palace.

Lieutenant Abdouh Abdouh, the Justice Minister, announced in a radio broadcast that the coup had failed.

A colonel was killed and about a dozen other troops wounded in the attempt to assassinate the President, but the attack was quickly broken up, Lieutenant Abdouh added.

Some reports said a young lieutenant leading about 60 men from Chad's French-armed paratrooper camel corps, the Gerde Nomade, had been arrested after two unsuccessful assaults with troops using bazookas, machineguns and armoured vehicles.

According to the official communiqué read by Lieutenant Abdouh, the second attackers included a second lieutenant named Ibrahim

Abakar Koumba, the communiqué said.

General Maiboum, who was reported to be safe, later left for Brazzaville, the Congolese capital, to attend the funeral of Major Marien Ngouabi, the Congolese President, who was shot dead on March 18.

After he left a nine-hour curfew was imposed on the city, which was reported to be calm as night fell. Guards surrounded the palace, but the airport remained open.

General Maiboum came to power in a military coup two years ago when President Tombalbaye was assassinated.

Less than a year ago, on the first anniversary of the coup, eight people died in a bomb attack on General Maiboum. Four members of the Chad National Liberation Front were sentenced to death last week for their part in the attack.

Agence France-Presse.

It remains a delicate diplomatic manoeuvre, all the same. It is easy enough to stop President Amin, but there would be no easy way to get him back.

Dr Owen, a Foreign Secretary, has said there is still plenty of time.

Background of Vance failure in Moscow

Has President Carter's bold initiative over human rights prejudiced the success of a limited version of the United States' policy in the Soviet Union?

By David Spitzer

As the Western negotiators in Moscow and his account of what happened and what it means for the future appears in The Sunday Times tomorrow.

Quebec to bilingualism

Quebec, April 1—The Parti Quebecois Government today introduced legislation requiring widespread use of French in education and private business throughout the province.

"There will no longer be any question of a bilingual Quebec," the Bill states.

Mr Camille Laurin, the Cultural Development Minister, told the provincial assembly that the Government intended to promote "vigorous assertion of the primacy of the French language in Quebec."

Under the proposal, children would have to enroll in French schools, unless at least one parent was educated in an English language school in Quebec.

If one parent receives English language education, could side Quebec, the Bill would be allowed to enroll the child in school only if it was an English school.

## Britain to sound out opinions on Amin visit

By David Spitzer

Diplomatic Correspondent

The attitudes of Commonwealth countries towards President Amin will be one of the main issues to be discussed by Lord Thomson, the former EEC commissioner, on his tour of Commonwealth countries, which starts today.

As the Prime Minister's personal emissary, he will visit Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, India, Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana, Ghana and Nigeria, returning to London on April 22. A second tour in May will include Canada, Barbados, Guyana, Trinidad and Jamaica.

It may be noted that Lord Thomson is not intending to visit Uganda while in Africa. Formally, the purpose of his tour, following previous precedents, is to discuss the agenda for the Commonwealth conference in London at the June. The underlying motive, however, is to sound out Commonwealth countries about President Amin's proposal to attend the conference in person.

Downing Street denied a "totally" report yesterday that Mr Callaghan had ordered that President Amin should be refused entry if he landed in Britain. The Government is aware of the great risk of offending African countries by seeking to bar an African leader who, moreover, has recently been in the chair of the Organisation of African Unity.

Its policy, on the contrary, is to proceed slowly and cautiously in the expectation that, in the end, President Amin will himself decide not to come to London.

The Government is taking the precaution, however, of sounding out Commonwealth countries as fully as possible, on their views. It would certainly feel surer about its course of action if the preponderant feeling among Commonwealth countries was against President Amin coming.

This was what Mr Rowlands, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, meant in his letter, reported in The Times yesterday, stating that feelings throughout the Commonwealth would be taken into account nearer the time, when the Government would have to decide whether to allow President Amin to enter or not.

Mr Rowlands said that given by the Foreign Office that if the Government felt justified, it might bar President Amin.

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Israel accuses of secret extradition

on the perimeter of Nairobi airport from El Al aircraft to land. It is claimed that two families had no news of them until August 23, when an anonymous letter was received saying that they had been arrested in Kenya but had later been extradited to Israel. It also alleged that the two had been tortured while under interrogation in Kenya in the presence of Israeli security agents.

After press reports had referred to the possibility that Birgitta might have been moved to Israel, a letter was sent to the West German Embassy in Tel Aviv on December 1. More than a month later a reply was received saying that neither the police nor the prison authorities had any knowledge of Birgitta Schultz or of Herr Reuter being held in Israel.

Arabic paper to be launched in London

By Edward Mortimer

A daily newspaper in Arabic is to be launched in London this autumn. It will be the only such newspaper outside the Arab world.

This was announced at a press conference in London by the prospective publisher and editor, Mr Rind El-Rayyes, a Syrian who was formerly a senior correspondent on the Beirut daily An-Nahar.

Mr El-Rayyes, who is now chairman of the newly-formed Portico group of companies, said his plans were based on a feasibility study by the Economic Intelligence Unit.

He explained that his reason for publishing the newspaper in London was to escape censorship and political pressures in Arab countries.

Fears for Javan tiger

Morges, Switzerland, April 1—The Javan tiger is in imminent danger of extinction with only four or five surviving, according to a report by the World Wildlife Fund and the Indonesian Government.



## HOME NEWS

Man in the news: DPP under more scrutiny

## A lawyer who has some special credentials

By Marcel Berlins

Legal Correspondent

Mr Tony Hetherington (no one calls him by his real name) takes over the office of Director of Public Prosecutions at a time when it is increasingly becoming the subject of public scrutiny and debate, as are individual decisions made by the director.

With proposals from a number of directions that there should be a change in the prosecution system in England and Wales and a review of the existing functions of the DPP, Mr Hetherington is likely to find himself far more in the public limelight and the subject of controversy than any of his predecessors.

For the past two years he has been the deputy Treasury Solicitor. His most important credentials for the job of DPP, however, come from his 13 years in the Law Officers' department, between 1962 and 1975, for the last nine years of which he was legal secretary.

That post, well hidden from the public, is important and influential. Legal secretary to the Attorney General and Solicitor General is a permanent thing, a permanent secretary, which that department has.

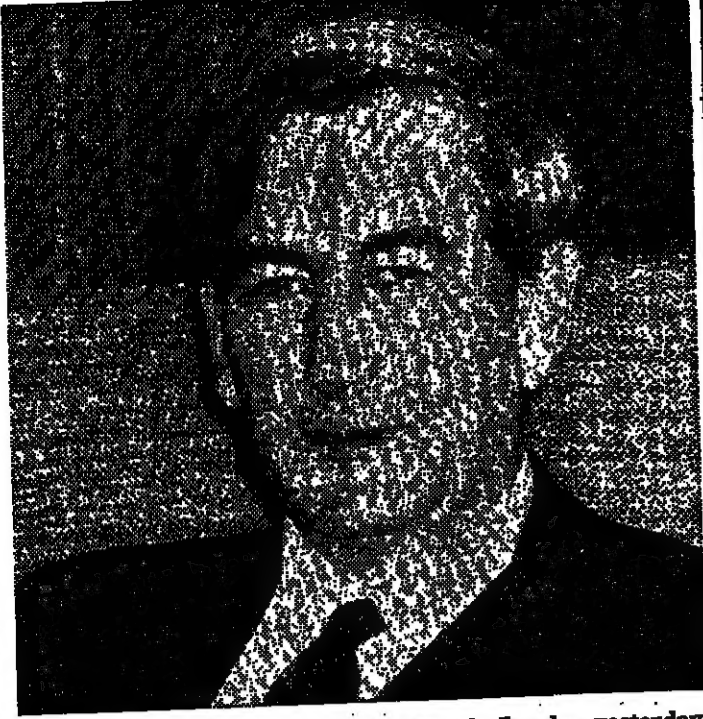
He reports and advises on all important decisions which the Attorney General has to take. They include some of the most sensitive and politically charged questions of the Attorney General's discretion in the criminal, civil and constitutional fields.

During his period with the Law Officers, Mr Hetherington was intimately involved in the decision-making process on such issues as whether to release the terrorist, Leila Khaled, or to take counter-measures against The Sunday Times for one of its thirteenth articles.

He had special responsibilities in the field of terrorism and bombing, including most of England's bomb prosecutions, and was instrumental in setting up the separate DPP's department for Northern Ireland last year.

While with the Law Officers he worked in constant and close relationship with the DPP's department, and will come to his new job on May 16, with much knowledge of its difficulties than most appointees to senior office.

Mr Hetherington, grey but much younger looking than his 50 years would suggest, was educated at Rugby and Christ Church, Oxford, the son of a Scottish doctor and feeling himself to be a Scot. He was called to the Bar in 1952. He is an outdoor man, passionately fond of the countryside, but burdened with no time-consuming hobbies.



Mr Thomas Hetherington in his office in London yesterday.

## Prisoner on remand to stay in an hotel

By Clive Borrell

Because train fares between Salop and London are so high, Mr Justice Donaldson decided in the High Court yesterday that it would be cheaper to keep a prisoner in an hotel in London over the weekend than to pay his return fare to Oswestry.

The judge told Brian Meredith, of Castlefields, Oswestry, that he could be granted bail to answer a contempt of court charge on Monday and stay over the weekend in London out of public funds.

The return fare would cost more than £16 and the service from Oswestry is so infrequent that Mr Meredith would have to start travelling on Sunday to arrive in London in time for his court appearance on Monday.

The cost of three night's accommodation even at one of London's cheapest hotels would exceed the return fare.

Although a social security official last night refused to discuss Mr Meredith's case, he said that he would be found accommodation during the weekend and be given spending money. His meal would be provided but the total cost to the department of his stay in London. All estimated that the cost could be greater than the return fare.

Mr Meredith had been in Pentonville prison since last Tuesday when he surrendered to police after learning that Mr Justice Melford Stevenson had ordered him to be jailed for not attending a court hearing.

Mr Meredith faces contempt of court proceedings for not appearing to answer allegations that he broke an order not to molest Mrs Janice Morris, of Prince Street, Oswestry.

## Animal suffering in tests 'lessened'

Many animals used in experiments were better cared for and in a healthier condition than domestic animals, the Congress of the British Small Animal Veterinary Association was told yesterday.

Mr Michael Peretz, president of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, also said there had been a great reduction in animal suffering during experiments.

The association said that because of the circumstances, but the process should be monitored. Dr. Smith, a senior lecturer in the department of medicine at the University of Liverpool, said that the standards for animal care in the country were high.

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## DIRECT ELECTIONS

Three alternatives to 'first past the post'

## Consequences of a new system of voting 'difficult to foresee'

The White Paper on direct elections to the European Assembly set out the possibility of a system of proportional representation, but reaches no conclusions.

By way of background to the White Paper the Government points out that article 138 (3) of the Treaty of Rome provides for a system of elections to the assembly on the basis of "direct universal suffrage in accordance with a uniform procedure for all member states".

The European Assembly is very different from the Westminster Parliament, the White Paper says, in that it has no independent legislative power and a government is not formed from its members.

However, it does have certain powers in relation to the limited powers of the Council of Ministers, and it has the power to dismiss the whole of the European Commission. The present nominated assembly has 198 members, of whom 36 represent the United Kingdom.

When directly elected, the assembly will have 410 members, with 51 from the United Kingdom. Direct elections have increasingly been seen as an important means of strengthening democratic participation in Community affairs.

A Green Paper on direct elections was presented to Parliament in 1976, and a select committee, set up after a Commons debate in March, 1976, has produced a report which has been of great assistance to the Government in their consideration of these difficult matters.

The select committee's report, dated September 20 last, that direct elections should be governed by the national provisions of each member state. The substantive provisions of the agreement would not come into force until all member states had completed their constitutional requirements.

The agreed intention was that the first direct elections should be held in the period May-June, 1978. But in recognition of possible legislative difficulties, a binding agreement has been made to use its best endeavours to be ready for elections by May-June, 1979.

November contained a commitment to introduce legislation in the present session of Parliament. The White Paper states: "The fundamental constitutional issues involved in direct elections to the European Assembly are of a technical nature."

It is the Government's view that the European Assembly, as it is, is a body of representatives of the member states, and that it is not a body of representatives of the people of the member states.

The electoral system: The White Paper says: "The United Kingdom has a distinctive electoral system, which has developed gradually over the last one and a half centuries, and which is different from that of any other country in the world."

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The four possible direct election systems mentioned in the White Paper are:

1. Simple majority system, as at present used in the United Kingdom.

2. List system of proportional representation, probably on a regional basis.

3. Single transferable vote.

4. Combination of one of the above with compulsory dual mandate, under which a member would serve both in the European Assembly and at Westminster.

number of assembly constituencies (61 against 63 in Westminster) further distorted the distribution of seats in relation to votes cast. There is a further point that, particularly at assembly elections, a wide divergence between the balance of power at Westminster and the composition of the European Assembly.

Since the European Assembly does not constitute a legislature or provide a government, and since its members do not have the same constituency responsibilities as Westminster M.P.s, it might not be open to the same criticism as the Westminster Parliament. A different institution might warrant a different form of list system.

The adoption of a list system would bring the United Kingdom into line with most of its European partners, and would ensure that the proportion of seats was more proportional to the votes cast in the competing parties. Since there would not be more than one dozen parties, the list could also be drawn up by a committee of representatives of the major parties.

To abandon our traditional method of electing members of the European Assembly would be a major constitutional innovation, the consequences of which are difficult to foresee.

It could lead to changes in party organisation, giving central party organisations a bigger role in nominating candidates. The role of constituency parties in electing members of the European Assembly would be reduced.

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## Only 1,000 cinemas may remain next year

By Our Arts Reporter

A warning that there could be fewer than 1,000 cinemas in Britain next year is given in the monthly journal of the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians.

The journal says that already there are no more than 1,500, compared with Italy's 10,000.

A report by the union's film production branch says that the British film industry is in acute need of government help.

A resolution for debate at the union's annual conference this weekend says the tax on each cinema seat sold should be directed to the purpose for which it was introduced, to provide finance for British film production.

The resolution recommends a cut-off point after which the money would no longer accrue to the cinema but would be credited to the producer. It would not be released to him until he started another production.

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## Ministers to prepare for summit at No 10

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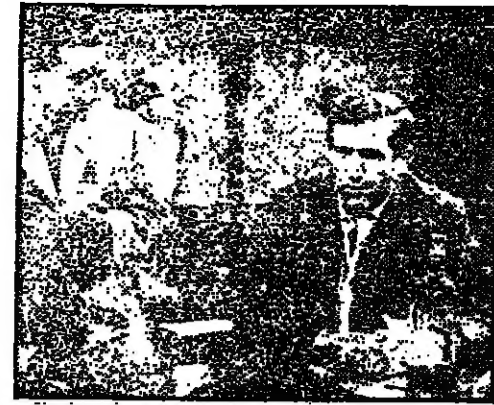






# The birth of The Avengers

Howard Thomas



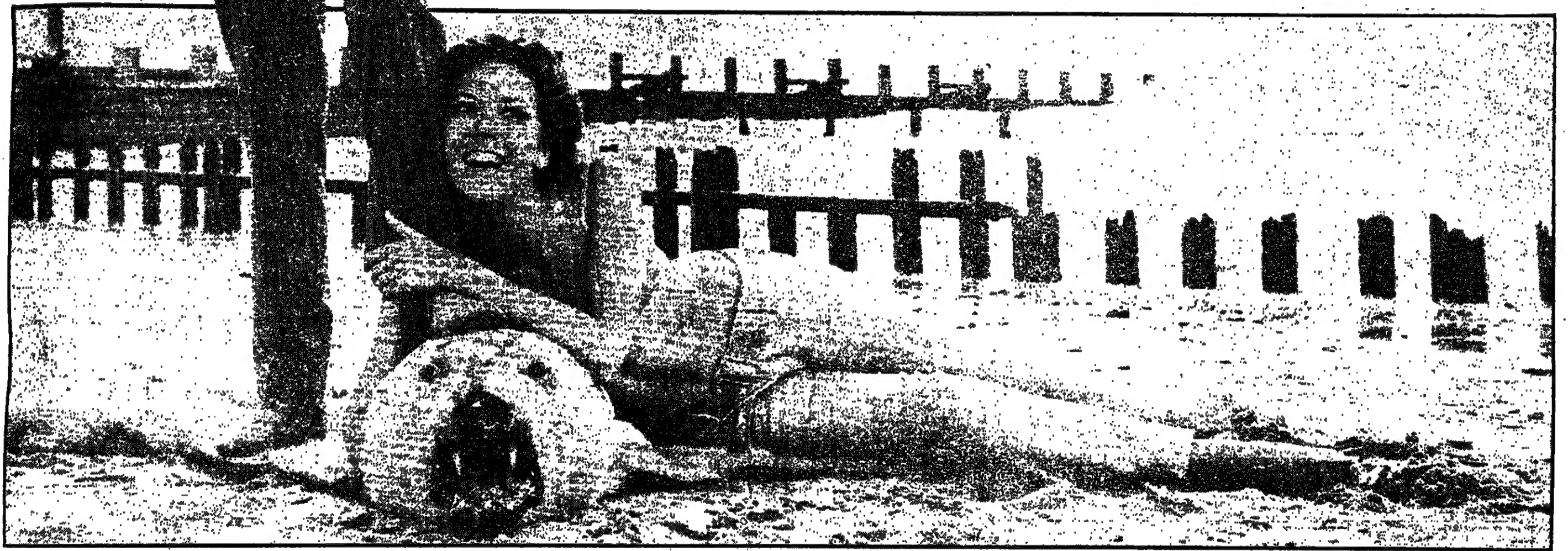
Above left: Macnee and Hendry (right), 1961

Above right: Macnee with Julie Stevens

Far left: Another villain felled

Left: Honor Blackman as Cathy Gale

Below: Dynamic duo of Macnee and Rigg



The early success of Independent Television owed much to Sunday night programme planning, when two-thirds of viewers switched to the combination of ATV's "Sunday Night at the London Palladium" and ABC's "Armchair Theatre". From the outset I had faith in the one-act play specially written for television, and Dennis Vance set up "Armchair Theatre", rehearsed in London for two weeks then broadcast live from Manchester after a single day in the studio. Then on BBC I watched a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation play "Flight into Danger" and found that the producer, Sydney Newman, was a man with a reputation for choosing topical subjects and then schooling writers to turn them into television scripts. "Flight into Danger" was written by a journalist, Arthur Hailey. Sydney Newman flew over to lunch with me at the Ivy on Christmas Eve and within four months joined us at ABC Television.

During Sydney Newman's four and a half years with ABC, Armchair Theatre reached the heights of British television drama although sometimes it also touched the depths of depression. The Daily Mail headlined his move with "BBC Signs TV 'Dustbin' Man". This was unfairly sensational but undoubtedly a play series which mirrored life at the end of the nineteen-fifties provided Sydney's dramatists with plenty of depressing subjects.

As the percentage increased of realistic and gloomy plays I suggested to Newman that our drama schedules needed balancing with something more light-hearted and sophisticated. I reminded him of the days when MGM produced sparkling comedies tailored for their contract stars like Clark Gable, Carole Lombard, Myrna Loy and Norma Shearer, elegantly dressed and in fashionable settings. Why couldn't we make a series based for instance, on *The Thin Man*, with characters like those made famous by William Powell and Myrna Loy? This suggestion appealed to the ever-receptive Sydney and he came back quickly with a proposal. Seeking popular new series he had coined a title, *Police Surgeon*, which seemed to have the elements of box-office appeal. In spite of the performance of a compelling young actor, Ian Hendry, the first episode had made little impact. We looked at a newly completed episode in which Ian Hendry acted with Patrick Macnee, an actor who had recently returned to Britain after a few years in Hollywood. In the episode Macnee's girl friend had been murdered and the two men vowed to avenge her death.

Sydney Newman's proposal was that we should team the two actors. Hendry again as a doctor and Macnee as a man-about-town agent. A girl was needed to match them and as we could not decide upon the most suitable of two actresses we alternated between ABC's young found in Manchester, with a former Rank starlet who had matured into an accomplished actress, Honor Blackman.

to network. It gave the programme an unexpected opportunity for a provincial try-out, the method by which Charles B. Cochran used to polish his revues in Manchester before bringing them to London to confront West End critics and audiences. The first year's run was interrupted by a long Equity strike and it was not until May 1962 that we were able to launch the series in what became the familiar format. Ian Hendry had decided that he had no wish to be type-cast in a regular series and he dropped out, although he continued to appear often for ABC in important plays. Honor Blackman's stylish authority was exactly right for the part of Cathy Gale. Julie Stevens went off in the opposite direction, to become one of the regular presenters in a BBC children's programme.

The *Avengers* unit quickly became a dedicated team, with an eager young Scot, John Bryce, as producer working closely with Richard Bates as story editor. Patrick Macnee was dandified in Edwardian style, wearing braided suits and embroidered waistcoats, plus a curly bowler hat and an umbrella—words which Macnee always ready to use ungentlemanly tactics in dealing with rough customers. Michael Whitaker and Frederick Sparke designed clothes for Honor Blackman, and her man-tailored suits, high boots, leather jenkins and cat suits started fashion trends which became a trademark of the programme. Richard Bates (a son of the author H. E. Bates) had dozens of writers at one time or another working on the series, but the main scripts he selected came from Roger Marshall, Brian Clemens, Eric Paice and Malcolm Hulke.

A similar script, produced in a film studio at the normal average series rate of five minutes a day, would take two weeks of full studio usage, plus the consequent cost of editing and dubbing music and sound effects. Such film costs averaged £40,000 for a one-hour episode, but this included world rights on actors' performances and writers' scripts. The ITV network would pay £20,000 for two transmissions of these films, so the producer would still need to collect

another £20,000 from world sales to recover his costs. Earnings on this scale were almost impossible to achieve unless the series was sold to America, either through a network or syndicated to a few hundred individual stations. Only ATV and ABC ever succeeded in breaking into the American networks, although years later the BBC managed to get one or two of its costume play series and documentaries transmitted. Partly because of my contention that a filmed series of *The Avengers* would bring a year's work to Elstree studio stages the Board of ABC finally agreed to let me spend the million pounds on a one-hour programme in black-and-white film.

Julian Wintle was a feature film producer with a reputation for producing consistent films of quality on a commercial basis, and we had already gone through a trial run in making *The Human Jungle*, a series he brought to ABC. Wintle's particular skill was in the editing of film and his post-production touches could provide the gloss and glamour *The Avengers* demanded. I put all the elements of a successful television series at his disposal: producers, directors, script editors, writers, designers, and cast, and so all this he added his own skills, aided by his production supervisor Albert Fennell.

Honor Blackman seemed almost irreplaceable until we came across another actress who was both beautiful and accomplished. Having lost our Cathy Gale to James Bond the script editors invented a new character, Emma Peel. The name was coined by a press officer on the ABC series, Marie Donaldson, based on "Man appeal—m appeal—Emma Peel! See?"

Wintle and I scrutinized all the rushes and the rough cuts of the first three episodes. They were depressing. The actress was not right for the part. The three episodes were not good enough. I had to make a bitter decision. At a cost of the £120,000 already spent, I had to halt production and find a replacement.

Everyone connected with *The Avengers* and Drama Department came up with sug-

gestions for a new "Emma Peel" and we made screen tests of a dozen young actresses. Many were promising, yet not sufficiently outstanding. Then Dodo Watts, our casting director, asked me to look at an actress she had cast for an Armchair Theatre comedy. The play had just been recorded but not transmitted, and we played it back on closed circuit. The actress was a member of Peter Hall's Royal Shakespeare Company and she was attractive, intelligent, combative and had a fine sense of comedy. She came to Elstree Studios for a film test and (for this was vital) to play a scene opposite Pat Macnee. The chemistry worked—they were perfectly partnered. Diana Rigg was signed up on a long-term contract to play the part.

Our overseas sales were then being handled by Bob Norris, a Californian who, as a consequence of marrying an English girl, settled in Britain. Although interest had been aroused in the States in spite of the rather fuzzy telecastings of earlier video-taped episodes, there was no sign of a sale to any of the three major United States networks. With half the filmed series completed, and half a million pounds spent, the situation began to look desperate. Norris and I flew to New York to talk the network bosses.

It was the worst week of my television life. Every day we would set forth from the Gotham Hotel with our cans of film, our charts and statistics, and plod around Manhattan, talking to executives and screening episodes to potential buyers. Every evening we would slump back into our chairs in the hotel and hope for the telephone to ring.

Both NBC and CBS continued to show interest but we encountered the inbuilt antipathy to British accents and lack of pace which the British film industry has rarely been able to overcome. Again, we discovered, the programme buyers in top jobs at the network were cautious and unadventurous, because their livelihood depends upon successful decisions and they were judged by results at the end of every season. The "mortality rate" of such American

network executives has always been alarming.

Then I had a stroke of good fortune. I had known for many years the president of the ABC network, Leonard Goldenson, who had come into television from the film world of Paramount and on several occasions he had visited our company, ABC, in London. An anglophile, he appreciated the quality of British production in films, theatre and television and he was most helpful and encouraging. However, sometimes nothing can be more fatal than a boost from the boss and a recommendation or even an instruction from the front office can be the kiss of death to a hopeful performer or producer. Luckily, Tom Moore, the ABC programme executive, had screened several episodes of *The Avengers* with increasing interest, and this confirmation of his own judgment proved to be timely.

By Friday morning, our last day in New York, Norris and I found ourselves with two final hurdles to overcome. The films were in black-and-white and the networks were insisting that all series should now be filmed in colour. We talked our way out of this on the thin excuse that *The Avengers* would have the distinction of being the last TV series sold to America in monochrome. Our remaining hope had been to get the series into the network schedule during the summer months, when the regular programme series were off the air. Otherwise the second and final chance was that our series could be a replacement for one of the other new series which collapsed in the early months of a new season. ABC executives came to take the first 13 programmes on this basis in black-and-white. If by some miracle the series succeeded and they wanted more, then we would have to go into colour for the second 13. The other difficulty was the unknown girl who was starring in the series. Now that a sale was within sight flocks of ABC executives came to screenings of the episodes to inspect the product they might be handling in their respective departments. They all thought her very good, but she was completely unknown. They had never heard of her. She was not even a British star! What the series needed, they were

certain, was a bright young American starlet in the part of Emma Peel.

I refused. The essence of *The Avengers* was in Englishness. That was the quality which basically appealed to them and I insisted it would also be a reason for winning a new audience; something totally unlike any American series. We held on and Diana Rigg stayed in, to become a television star in the United States as well as throughout the world. Long after, Diana was besieged by all three American networks to appear in a series of her own, built around her, at her own price. Ultimately the vehicle designed for her followed a typical American pattern and could indeed have been played by an American actress, but it failed to be a series of which Diana Rigg could be proud.

Back we came to London, with 13 episodes sold, to try to convert the remaining episodes to colour, even though we would have to go above budget. Weeks of waiting went by, until the first Nielsen Research audience ratings were telephoned to us. Then came the cable when ABC took up the options for the second 13 and, with the series already leaping into popularity, an option for another 26 in colour. *The Avengers* developed into a cult in the United States and even today when I go to New York repeats are still running in the small hours.

A happy moment was when the contracts were signed and we announced the sale to the United States, forecasting how many millions of dollars the series was going to bring to Britain. *The Evening Standard* headlined this as the biggest television deal ever made with the United States. Within an hour of publication a furious Lew Grade was on the telephone yelling that it was not the biggest deal. His were always the biggest deals! In fact, *The Avengers* ultimately earned 10 million dollars overseas and revenue is still coming in.

The most pleasing aspect to me was that we had produced the series to British standards and not to American requirements. This has always been the difference in attitudes towards overseas sales between







a novel of the valiant effort played  
by escort carriers in World War II



# ENTERTAINMENTS

ALSO ON PAGE 10

## ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL

TOMORROW at 7.00 p.m.

### MESSIAH

New Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus

John Pritchard  
Norma Burrows  
Wynford Evans  
Alfreda Hodgson  
John Shirley-Quirk

MONDAY NEXT, 4 APRIL at 8 p.m.

## SNO SCOTTISH NATIONAL ORCHESTRA

HAYDN Symphony 86 MAHLER Symphony 5

### ALEXANDER GIBSON

52.20, 53.70, 55.20, 57.50, 59.00, 60.00, from Hall (01-928 3191) & Agents

WEDNESDAY NEXT, 6 APRIL at 8 p.m.

## LONDON MOZART PLAYERS

Conductor: HARRY BLECH

DMITRI ALEXEEV

52.20, 53.70, 55.20, 57.50, 59.00, 60.00, from Hall (01-928 3191) & Agents

GOOD FRIDAY, 4 APRIL at 8 p.m.

### BACH-ST. MATTHEW PASSION

Complete and in German. Sunday interval of 1 hour

David Johnston (Evangelist) Bernard Ingham (Christ) Felicity Lee (Ave Maria) Philip Langridge (Jesus) Brian Raftery (Carpenter)

English Baroque Orchestra. London Choral Society

52.20, 53.70, 55.20, 57.50, 59.00, 60.00, from Hall (01-928 3191) & Agents

WEDNESDAY NEXT, 6 APRIL at 8 p.m.

## RUDOLF BARSHAI

Founder of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra

English Chamber Orchestra

Soloist: WALTER KLIEN

MOZART CONCERT

Symphony in D, K.388

Piano Concerto in E flat, K.595

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K.550

52.20, 53.70, 55.20, 57.50, 59.00, 60.00, from Hall (01-928 3191) & Agents

WEDNESDAY, 20 APRIL at 8.00

JOHN ELIOT GARDNER

FELICITY PALMER

52.20, 53.70, 55.20, 57.50, 59.00, 60.00, from Hall (01-928 3191) & Agents

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WEDNESDAY, 20 APRIL at 8.00

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## QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL



RAYMOND GUBBY presents

THURSDAY 21 APRIL at 7.45 p.m.

### PETER KATIN piano

Schubert Four Impromptus, D.999  
Beethoven Sonata in C minor, Op. 13 (Pathétique)  
Kata Notturno (First British performance)  
Debussy Suite Bergamasque  
Chopin Polonaise in F sharp minor, Op. 44

70p, 52.00, 51.40, 51.80, 52.20, from Hall (01-928 3191) & Agents

## PURCELL ROOM

Today 7.45 p.m.  
5.20 p.m.  
10.30 p.m.  
Friday 15 April 7.30 p.m.  
BEEHIVEN To commemorate the 150th anniversary of his death, SALVATORE VASSONVI will perform the 52 Piano Sonatas in chronological order. (Approx. 5 hours playing time each day with appropriate intervals.) Detailed leaflet available.  
25.50 (1 day), 27.50 (2 days), 29.50 (3 days), 31.50 (4 days), 33.50 (5 days), 35.50 (6 days), 37.50 (7 days), 39.50 (8 days), 41.50 (9 days), 43.50 (10 days), 45.50 (11 days), 47.50 (12 days), 49.50 (13 days), 51.50 (14 days), 53.50 (15 days), 55.50 (16 days), 57.50 (17 days), 59.50 (18 days), 61.50 (19 days), 63.50 (20 days), 65.50 (21 days), 67.50 (22 days), 69.50 (23 days), 71.50 (24 days), 73.50 (25 days), 75.50 (26 days), 77.50 (27 days), 79.50 (28 days), 81.50 (29 days), 83.50 (30 days), 85.50 (31 days), 87.50 (32 days), 89.50 (33 days), 91.50 (34 days), 93.50 (35 days), 95.50 (36 days), 97.50 (37 days), 99.50 (38 days), 101.50 (39 days), 103.50 (40 days), 105.50 (41 days), 107.50 (42 days), 109.50 (43 days), 111.50 (44 days), 113.50 (45 days), 115.50 (46 days), 117.50 (47 days), 119.50 (48 days), 121.50 (49 days), 123.50 (50 days), 125.50 (51 days), 127.50 (52 days), 129.50 (53 days), 131.50 (54 days), 133.50 (55 days), 135.50 (56 days), 137.50 (57 days), 139.50 (58 days), 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## Gardening

## Shrub that cheers

Considerable mental dissension can be caused when one spouse, usually but not always the wife, becomes enthralled by flower arranging. The most ingenious flower arrangements, and those most likely to win prizes at shows, usually consist at least in part of the more unusual flowers, foliage or fruits, or even bark or seed heads, which are seldom seen in the shops. These you have to grow. So the temptation to gradually fill the garden with plants to provide "material" for arrangements is strong, and too often the garden suffers aesthetically.

But this need not necessarily happen. On the principle that "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em", the non-flower-arranging spouse could enter into the spirit of the game and jointly the spouses could plan a garden that is both lovely to look at and productive of material for the floral concoctions. One must, of course, add the proviso that a certain amount of restraint is needed with the cutting of trees and shrubs for flowers or foliage.

All gardens need some evergreen trees or shrubs. These may be chosen to furnish the garden with green, gold or variegated foliage to cheer up the barren winter scene, to provide cut foliage throughout the year, or to act as a foil for the colourful summer flowers.

Many shrubs, such as *Yucca filifera*, flowering currant, *Forbesia* and *Hebe*, prosper by being carefully and sensibly used to provide cutting material. In effect this is a form of pruning which encourages the production of generous quantities of flowering side shoots.

Some shrubs like *Forbesia*, and trees like almond and ornamental cherries, are also valuable because branches may be cut in bud in January and brought indoors to open their flowers in the dark days when cut flowers are flimsily expensive in the shops.

Most flowering shrubs—lilacs, shrub roses, philadelphus or mock orange, climbers like clematis and honeysuckle, and many more, are lovely in the garden and superb in a bowl or vase. Then many have ornamental foliage—again, charming in the garden or indoors. Where space is limited it pays to give considerable thought to the choice of these trees or shrubs that could give two, or sometimes three dividends.

Apart from the depths of winter when there is little enough to cut from the garden, I think the period March to early June is one when flowers are expensive, and unless we have deliberately planted for this period there is not likely to be all that much to cut in the garden.

Obviously daffodils and tulips, polyanthus, wallflowers, dromedaries, white, green, or rosy hellebores—varieties of *Helleborus niger*, *H. coriaceus* or *H. orientalis*, to be followed by sweet williams and Dutch irises will take us through to mid June. By then in the southern half of the country at least, peonies, lilies, delphiniums, lupins, campanulas, pyrethrums, roses and sweet peas will be coming along. After that the whole range of

## Jobs

## for April

This year the programme for most of us is to catch up on the jobs we did not do in March because the ground was too wet. We have not even finished scarifying our lawns with the motorized rake because they are so wet.

However, it is a job to be done as a priority, as is applying a moss killer and the first application of a spring fertilizer if not already done. The second application should be put on four weeks later.

If worms are troublesome, apply a worm killer; if you do not care to do this be sure to sweep off worm casts regularly so that they are not squashed into the lawn.

Apply a selective weedkiller if necessary at the end of the month.

Apply Herbol Garden Herbicide to clean ground to keep it clear of seedling weeds.

Sow hardy annuals outdoors. Sow in a greenhouse half hardy annuals.

Prick off seedlings sown earlier.

Plant gladioli and, at the end of the month, dahlias tubers, making sure there are six of

soil over both the dahlias and the gladioli.

Finish pruning the roses, and cutting down and tidying up hedges or borders of hardy flowers. Apply a suitable fertilizer.

Prune forsythias and winter flowering jasmines.

Put twiggy sticks around clumps of herbaceous plants like ageratum, oriental poppies, veronicas or others that may tend to flop about. Do this in good time, before there is any danger of a storm knocking them down.

Watch carefully for aphids, caterpillars and other pests on the underside of leaves of roses, currants and other plants you know may be affected by pests, and apply an appropriate spray. If blackspot and mildew on roses or other diseases have been troublesome in the past, spray with a suitable fungicide every 10 days.

Sow peas, broad beans, lettuce, radishes, onions, beet, root, carrots, in the open.

Sow marrows, runner beans and sweet corn in pots under glass.

Plant potatoes.

Roy Hay

## Travel

## Caribbean charm in the Atlantic

My friend and colleague was sitting by the bar with a yellow bird—a drink not an animal or a person—in his hand. He was offering four one-acre lots on Green Turtle Cay in exchange for 10 acres of Current Club on Eluthera. American tourists were listening to him mesmerized. Of course, he had no lots to sell, but the Bahamas goes you like that, and by the end of his sales pitch we were all—including him—half convinced that he did have them.

The difference in the size of plots was appropriate; the tiny area of Green Turtle Cay was most attractive with its duck-board houses and its friendly, rather shy inhabitants. It is only when you visit these small settlements that you realize that in addition to the black majority in the population there are many whites whose ancestors may have come to the Bahamas as long ago as the first Elizabethan age, though most of them are loyalists who fled to the United States more than 200 years ago at the time of the War of Independence. Current, although it, too, has a small old settlement, is more sprawling and less characteristic of traditional Bahamas out-islands life.

For most people the Bahamas is Nassau, but those who do not visit at least one of the many hundreds of out-islands are missing a great deal. Their holiday attractions are as abundant as the gloriously coloured fish which can be seen if you go snorkelling on the reefs surrounding many of the islands.

Nassau offers smart hotels, nightclubs, a casino. The out-islands, on the other hand, though offering excellent hotel accommodation, tend to concentrate on golf and water activities.

On this visit I did not do many of the things I could have done: I did not pass sail (that's being towed behind a speedboat fastened to a parachute), wind sail (with a sail poised on what looks like a sunboard), swim under water with an aquaplane, play golf, gamble in the casino, play tennis, go deep-sea fishing, water-ski.

The attractions of the Bahamas are immense. After all, the Bahamas is tourism.

About 70 per cent of the national income comes from it and the Government is at pains to improve and increase the facilities available. For golfers there are many excellent courses, not only in Nassau but also in the out-islands, where they are usually attached to an hotel "club". My golfing colleagues found the courses as excellent as I found the water activities.

But the prospective British tourist should note that accommodation and food in the Bahamas are completely geared to American tastes. Menu descriptions can disguise good wholesome food, and some combinations are rather unusual, not to say, odd. "Sun and Turt", or "Hot and Claw", arrives on one plate as a fillet steak accompanied by a huge piece of lobster. Other things will come "fresh from the sparkling waters", "honey-scattered", "home baked" or whatever—they are all disguises for perfectly good ordinary food.

Drinks, too, have elaborate names, but here they are justified. You may eventually tire of the rich taste of some of them, but they are well worth trying, with their mixtures of fruit juices—some, like pineapple, quite new to British palates—and several varieties of rum and other spirits.

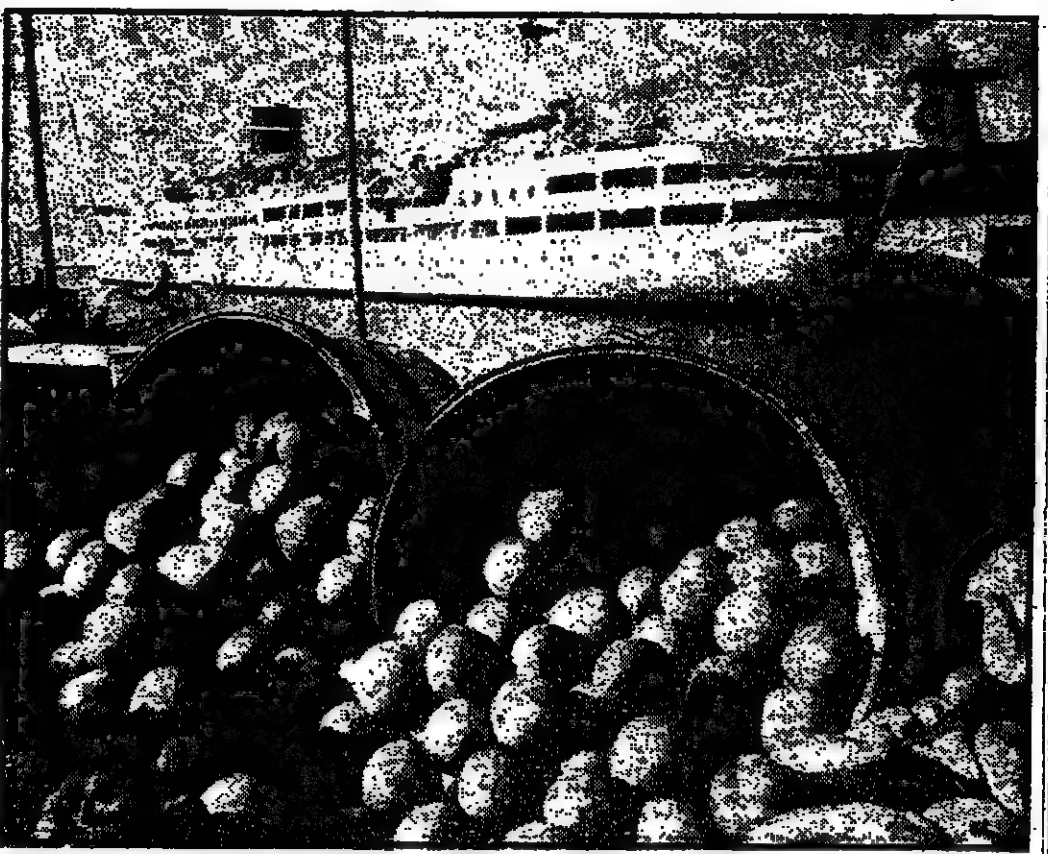
For people thinking of a Caribbean holiday, I would strongly recommend the Bahamas as a first trip. It is not, of course, actually in the Caribbean but in the Atlantic, though the atmosphere is similar. The Bahamas climate is better than many places in the Caribbean—it is rather cooler and drier. The time to go is in the winter, when the days are clear and bright and there is little rain. It is always warm enough to swim. Those who find it difficult to cope with hot weather may find the summer wearing, but the days are hot and there is

often rain in the middle of the day.

If you react badly to insect bites do not forget barrier cream and consider taking a mild anti-histamine pill. This helps to keep down the reaction, though it may make you feel a little dizzy. You may feel dozy anyway. The climate is most relaxing.

How to get there: British Airways London to Nassau-Apex return (must be booked and paid for two months before) for 14 to 45 days, £206.50 in the low season rising to £238.50 in the high. A 22-day day excursion is £242 to £283.50. Ordinary economy return, £447 to £520. British Airways Sovereign package tours start at £265 for 14 days in a private house or £495 at the Nassau Beach hotel in the low season, rising to £425 and £54 respectively at the peak of the high season.

Margaret Allen



## Bridge

## Lost opportunities

Whenever a player has bid without a trick in his hand he is inevitably blamed by his partner after the defence has succeeded. One of my late partners whose instinct was better than his technique, used to say when he had raised me on next-to-nothing and his hand went down, for all to see, "Don't forget that I was under pressure." That was how I learned how to visualize the kind of strength in the opponents' hands by allowing for my partner to have nothing more than trump support.

There is no excuse for failing to use the information given by your partner even if he has raised with a yarrowbough or signalled without an honour in your suit. East had an opportunity to show his brilliance after winning the first trick, but he could not picture the hidden hand and was lost.

North South game; dealer East.

West's opening lead of the ♠9 was superior to the lead of the ♠4 because it might have been important for East to know his partner's highest card in the suit. East won with the ♠Q and, without stopping to reflect, tried to cash the ♠A. There was now no defence: South ruffed, led the ♠Q and discarded two losing hearts on dummy's clubs after he had driven out the ♠A. If East had refused to win the ♠A, declarer would obtain a heart ruff in dummy.

West could have deduced from the bidding that declarer has a singleton diamond and he needed to weigh carefully the choice between the lead of a heart or a trump. If he concluded that West had a near-yarrowbough, he would have returned a trump and refused to play his winning club. Declarer might then have been persuaded to play for a 3-3 division of the missing hearts after drawing trumps, and lose two tricks in the suit.

A commonplace defence which is often overlooked depends on the discard of a high card in the suit which has been opened. It may seem elementary to throw away a winner when you wish to avoid an end-play, but it is not always

easy to see the importance early in the game of discarding a North South game; dealer East.

West has the choice between passive and aggressive leads. He has too many high cards for a waiting game because he can be confident that South has an established club suit which will give him an advantage over the declarer who has yet to discover how to unite. If West decides to keep his high cards in reserve, declarer will cash his tricks and be able to establish two hearts after West has discarded the ♠7. By making the customary attacking lead of a small spade West is surrendering a trick but is actually making the declarer's task as difficult as possible. All will then depend on whether an entry can be created in East's hand.

When the ♠5 is led to the ♠Q the only information East can give is a signal with the highest spade he can afford—the ♠6, but this is invaluable when declarer is seen to over-

take his winning ♠3 with the ♠Q. South runs his clubs and discards if he is seeking to preserve his spades.

Being improvising West, probably throws his ♠7 followed by the ♠J, and then reluctantly parts with a spade which is likely to be the ♠2. Declarer will for the lead up to his ♠K for his eighth trick and West cannot avoid the end-play because he did not take sufficient note of the first trick or help his partner by his discards. The card which West should have preserved at all costs was his ♠2 and, to ensure that East kept his ♠7, he should have thrown his ♠K at the first opportunity followed by the ♠J or ♠9. The position after six tricks had been played would then be:

Declarer plays his ♠Q taken by West who leads his ♠J, knowing from the first trick that South's ♠A is here. As he puts his partner on play with the ♠2, discards his ♠J on East's long spade and breaks the contract when a diamond is returned.

Edward Mayer

## Food

## Let them eat bread and cake

Teabreads are served sliced and buttered. They are more interesting than plain bread, but not so rich as cake which makes them very good for children's teas. So that they will slice nicely and can be buttered without the crumb tearing, try to bake them the day before. In fact teabreads keep very well if you wrap them in foil or enclose in a tin once they are quite cold. When baked, toast your bread in the same way as a cake, that is by slipping a skewer between the loaf and the tin for a moment to warm it and then push right into the centre. When drawn out there should be no sign of any wet, uncooked mixture.

Makes 1 large loaf

10oz mixed dried fruit;

7oz soft brown sugar;

1 pint cold tea;

1 egg;

10oz self-raising flour.

Measure the dried fruit and soft brown sugar into a mixing basin. Pour over the cold tea and leave to stand overnight. Next day, stir up the ingredients, add the egg and the flour

and mix thoroughly together. Pour the mixture into a well buttered large 2lb loaf tin and bake in the centre of a moderate oven (350 deg F or gas 4) for 1½ hours. Loosen sides, turn out and allow to cool.

Banana bread

Makes 1 large loaf

8 oz self-raising flour;

1 level teaspoon salt;

4 oz butter;

6 oz castor sugar;

4 oz sultanas;

1 oz chopped walnuts;

4 oz seed glacé cherries;

3 medium sized ripe bananas;

2 eggs.

Sift the flour and salt into a mixing basin. Add the butter cut in pieces and rub into the mixture. Add the sugar, sultanas, chopped walnuts and the glacé cherries which have been rinsed under warm water to remove the outer sugary coating, then patted dry and cut in half. Peel the bananas, mash to a puree with a fork and then add to the dry ingredients along with the eggs. Mix very thoroughly together.

Spoon the mixture into a well buttered large 2lb loaf tin and bake in the centre of a moderate oven (350 deg F or gas 4) for 1½ hours. Loosen sides, turn out and allow to cool.

Pour the mixture into a well buttered large 2lb loaf tin and bake in the centre of a moderate oven (350 deg F or gas 4) for 1½ hours. Loosen sides, turn out and allow to cool.

Malt bread

You can buy malt extract from chemists; make sure you get malt extract and not the malt and cod liver oil mixture.

Makes 1 large loaf

12oz self-raising flour;

1 level teaspoon salt;

2 oz castor sugar;

4 oz sultanas;

2 rounded tablespoons malt extract;

1 rounded tablespoon black treacle;

1 pint milk.

Sift the flour and salt into a mixing basin. Add the sugar and sultanas. Measure the malt extract, treacle and milk into a saucepan and warm over low heat stirring to blend them together. Pour into the dry ingredients and mix very thoroughly.

Pour the mixture into a well buttered 2lb loaf tin and bake in the centre of a moderate oven (350 deg F or gas 4) for 1½ hours. Loosen sides, turn out. While the loaf is warm from the oven, brush with a hot glaze made by boiling together for one minute, one tablespoon each of castor sugar, milk and water—this gives the malt bread a shiny top. Allow to cool.

Katie Stewart

## Collecting

## Pious paintings

Despite three years spent in a Roman-Catholic convent school, my Protestant upbringing had not prepared me, when I was 16, for the glories of the churches in Paris, the sugary domed Sacre-Coeur, with its banks of candles and clouds of incense, the extravagant sculpture of the Madeleine and the heavy pomposity of St Sulpice and St Augustin. A few years later, I was taken by some friends to a small mountain chapel in the Var. It was less spectacular at first sight, but then I saw in the gloom that it was panelled from ceiling to floor with votive paintings and offerings, each with their story of hope or despair. As an impassioned reader of inscriptions on tombs and memorial plaques, I found these "proofs of the piety and gratefulness of the faithful" as the nineteenth-century *Grande Encyclopedie* puts it, both fascinating and touching.

Ex-votos were placed in Catholic churches of chapels in thanksgiving to Christ, the Virgin Mary or a saint for having miraculously saved someone from a desperate situation, an accident, mortal illness, madness, imprisonment, war, or a natural catastrophe. Others were in supplication for a child, a peaceful death, a happy married life, or for the safe return of a relative from war. All over France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Corsica, Austria, South Germany, Switzerland, and Yugoslavia and (through the influence of immigrants and missionaries) Mexico and the South American countries, one can find votive paintings hung amongst figures in terracotta, wax, stone, discarded crucifixes or canes, model boats offered by sailors saved from shipwrecks, or wooden and metal eyes, arms, legs or breasts cured by heavenly intervention.

The offering of a votive object was part of the bargain between God and the believer, an insurance that prayers would be heard, or an outward mark of gratitude that grace had been shown. The custom reassured the community of its social and spiritual well-being, while ex-votos attracted pilgrims to the shrine or chapel, as they were a sign of the virtue of the saint in question.

With the modernisation of many places of worship, a good many ex-votos were sold or just given away, ending up inevitably in dealers' shops, street markets, and auctions. They are becoming very rare, however, since many collections of votive paintings are usually in churches or on gables on wood, or under glass. The saint to whom the invocation was addressed and who came to the last-minute rescue appears as a vision. Sometimes the donor is shown praying, touched by rays from the saint above, or with flames appearing from his heart. From 1600 onwards, the words ex-voto appear, or the initials E.V.S. (ex-voto suscipit, E.V.G. (ex-voto gratias accipit), V.Q.F. (voto quo facit) or G.R. (gratia retribuit) depending of course on the country of origin. Many are dated, with the name of the donor, and some have long inscriptions explaining the circumstances in which the row was made. They have all the vividness of a clearly recalled and often recounted dramatic experience, and through their pictorial primitiveness they convey the essence of the situation.

Ex-votos, an essentially folk art, were taken seriously from naive and primitive painters came into fashion in the late 1850s and 60s. Exhibitions were held in which private churches and museums lent their collections, notably the Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires, Paris, the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich, the Kunsthalle, Bern, the Schweizerisches Catholic Museum für Volks-

kunde, Basle, and the Österreichischen Museen für Volkskunde, Vienna.

The offering of ex-votos goes back to classical times, when warriors placed their swords or shields in temples after a successful battle, adhering their wreaths and trophies, women their belts, veils or cuttings of hair. The custom was revived by the Catholic Church around 1300, when professional and often amateur artists were commissioned to paint a representation of an accident or the saving of a city from the plague. Except for the subject matter, they differentiated very little from the usual religious picture.

By the seventeenth-century, the commissions were being carried out by craftsmen who were normally employed to paint rustic furniture, inn or shop signs and fairground booths. From the late eighteenth-century onwards, the pictures were painted by simple local artists and if there was a marked decline in technical quality, the painting increased in fervour and emotion. The artist was unconcerned with public appreciation and painted with the simplicity of a child, without perspective or corporeal structure. He relied on his imagination and improvised without reference to a pictorial tradition, although one does find that there is a certain continuity, particularly in cases of mortal illness, where the sick person lies, comatose in bed, while his family kneel praying or throwing their arms in despair.

The following examples are a few of the remarkable or tragicomic things which are shown in ex-voto paintings: a man struck by sudden illness while playing a serenade on a mandolin; a forester falling off a branch on to his axe; attacks by banding pirates, bears, angry bulls and dogs; a rabid dog; a snooker player being hit with a cue during an argument; a man cleaning a well being hit on the head by a falling bucket; a baby accidentally dropped in to a basin of boiling water; an Alpine region of a mountain; a person falling off ladders or being surrounded by horses; the sole survivor of a group of soldiers in the trenches in the First World War; a man falling from a skyscraper. One of my favourite paintings is a seventeenth-century ex-voto of a farmer surrounded by his herd of kneeling cows, who have broad smiles on their faces, having miraculously avoided death in a bovine epidemic.

In Mexico and the South American countries, this naive religious art is still made. In Europe, on the other hand, it is difficult to be a true primitivist; I thought that I had discovered a modern ex-voto recently, but was disappointed to find that it was only a picture of a man being struck by a paving stone during the student barricades of May '68. Perhaps it had been painted to commemorate the fact that he had been compensated from his injury. After all, most of us now tend to rely on insurance companies rather than the saints to come to our rescue in times of disaster.

There is as yet no established collectors' market in ex-votos and there are no specialised dealers to turn to, though they are occasionally included in sales or exhibitions of naive paintings. Naturally enough, they are most often to be found for sale in Catholic countries, particularly Spain, Portugal or Austria. When a church or chapel is refurbished, they are likely to find their way into the hands of small local antique dealers. Prices vary according to date, subject and quality, but tend at present to run in the £50 to £200 range. In Naples you can still have one painted to your own specifications for £40.

Lynne Thornton

The author is a Paris auction expert on nineteenth-century painting.

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## Relax and learn a language with a little help from Bach

The first national conference of suggestology, an amazing and frightening new science said to be capable of unlocking the reserves of the human mind and harnessing the potential of super-memory, has recently taken place in Bulgaria. A planned world conference, however, has been unexpectedly postponed until next autumn. No reason has been given by the Bulgarian hosts.

This little-known branch of psychology, concerned with the use of music to practical work, the "locked" and unused 90 per cent of the human brain. Its prospects are tantalising.

Suggestology, the psychology of suggestion, has very wide application and it has achieved—according to Bulgarian scientists—striking results in the fields of education, psychiatry, neurology and telepathy. It has nothing to do with hypnosis or sleep-teaching.

Dr George Lozanov, its founding father, described his new discipline in an interview with the Sofia evening paper, *Vecherny Noviny*, when the Bulgarian authorities first allowed a glimpse at his work. "With suggestology you are always in the waking state and aware of everything around you."

Dr Lozanov, a physician and psychotherapist with impressive achievements in the field of parapsychology, so impressed the Bulgarian authorities that in 1969 the Institute of Suggestology and Parapsychology was created to further his work. It has a staff of 70 scientists, among them psychologists, physicians, physicists and engineers.

In the field of education, a rapid-learning method based on suggestology, which Dr Lozanov calls "suggestopiedics", has reportedly enabled students to complete a two-year foreign language course in 30 days.

Last October's conference heard reports of promising results obtained from the experimental teaching of mathematics with the Lozanov technique in the first form of primary schools.

Papers read at a seminar at the Bulgarian town of Haskovo last February asserted that the Lozanov technique, combining the most advanced scientific methods with old-style yoga "in a mind-to-mind contact between teacher and student", has enabled the students to learn up to 50 times faster without any effort.

The method itself, in which the senses are integrated, but in the past few years the yoga techniques have been played down. Its results, according to the Canadian Government, purchased the rights to the Lozanov system within the framework of a cultural exchange agreement with Moscow's Foreign Languages Institute has introduced experimental teachings courses based on it and the Slavic Languages Department of California University is using, without fanfare, the Lozanov technique.

Unesco first took interest in the Lozanov method about 10 years ago, and last spring Dr Lozanov was invited to Paris for a two-day demonstration at Unesco's educational method centre.

Since there are so many educational wonder techniques which eventually flake away, I asked Mr John E. Unesco's deputy director-

general, to assess the Paris experiment with suggestopiedics.

"One experiment on our staff involved the use of his technique for learning Italian (he has taught himself many languages). The result was not conclusive."

But he added that Dr Lozanov was "an impressive and serious scientist whose work deserves attention. There may be danger, however, that his hypotheses, findings and techniques attract investigations or those which tend towards dramatic or careless commercial applications."

Virtually nothing has been published in the western press about Dr Lozanov's rapid-learning technique. The courses last year, four hours a day, with one break. There are up to 12 students in a class.

Against a background of soft lighting and soothing Baroque music—mainly Bach's Goldberg Variations—the students relax in reclining chairs in the class. Each session consists of three parts: a revision of previous material, presentation of new material and a "passive" and an "active" memory reinforcement.

During the active part, the students must relax and "not think of anything". Each phrase or word is read by the teacher at certain intervals in three different tones and at three different voice levels, and the students repeat the phrases to themselves subvocally. During the passive session, the students relax, listening to Bach, while the teacher reads the material once again.

The next day the students, both young and old, of various capabilities, find that they remember perfectly the 200 new words learned during the previous session.

Suggestology has an even more significant application in the field of parapsychology, particularly telepathy, precognition and extra-sensory perception (ESP). As Dr Lozanov himself has hinted, "telepathy is an inexpensive and promising communication system for space and underwater exploration."

It is known, however, that he is working very closely with a Mr. V. Dimitrov, a Bulgarian clairvoyant who does not accord with the orthodox materialism of Bulgaria's communist regime, the Government has provided funds for the setting up and staffing of a laboratory in Sofia, which concentrates solely on Mrs Dimitrov's telepathic talents.

Dr Lozanov, too, has had a hand in the allegedly unscientific "oracles" of Mrs Dimitrov, but apart from a single public statement, admitting that "telepathy and clairvoyance can be cultivated by suggestology", he has refused to speak in public about this potentially more dangerous side of his mind-bending work.

Gabriel Ronay

The Tory triumph at Stechford puts many Conservatives to shame—all too many, not least a number of MPs, some of them former ministers.

I am speaking of those who have been so quick to criticize Mrs Thatcher in an outbreak of personal denigration and disparagement since the loss of the Opposition motion of no confidence in the Government 10 days ago. They have been accusing her not only of making a poor speech in the Commons debate (which is true) but of misjudging the issue and also of wider ineptitude.

The by-election victory must be considered a further vindication of Mrs Thatcher's leadership, a fresh proof of public approval. And of course it is much more: a repudiation of the Government, a call for change, a rebuff to the Liberals and their accommodation with Labour. Within the Conservative Party it is above all a reproach and a reproach to the faint-hearted (and worse) who have again been displaying such a lack of confidence by their conduct during the past week.

To listen to some of them you might have imagined that the Callaghan-Steel alliance was guaranteed to keep Labour in office for ever and a day. It could do so only if the Tory wobblers, the waverers and chameleons (whose instincts are inexpressibly feeble) were to deny Mrs Thatcher due support and if people of liberal disposition were overwhelmed by the Callaghan-Steel alliance which they are not.

What would these critics have said if she had failed to table that motion after the Government had run away from the vote (the non-vote) which preceded and provoked it? They would have attacked her for timidity and incompetence. But it is not only their judgment that is at fault.

The Tories are awfully bad losers, you know. They've no generosity. That is what a Conservative Party Minister, whom I shall not identify for the present, once said to me. He exaggerated, too sweeping, too generalized. Nevertheless it was true, and remains true, of over many.

No doubt it is true of other parties as well. The Liberals were not noticeably generous towards Mr Thorpe. Nor has the Labour Party been consistently generous towards successive leaders. From this we may conclude that there is



Mrs Thatcher after the by-election

result: a fresh proof

now of public approval

towards Mr Thorpe. Nor has the Labour Party been consistently generous towards successive leaders. From this we may conclude that there is

small thanks—little gratitude—to be had in politics except for "success". In the contentions of public policy, however, success—like truth—is

often subject to various interpretations, not only between parties but within them.

The probability, let us say, is that the Tories are not less generous than their opponents: if they sometimes seem so it is perhaps because loyalty to the incumbent leadership is supposed to be such an important aspect of their collective creed. Tending as they do to preach loyalty they are expected to practise it rather more than the next man.

We can now see that by his arrangement with Mr Steel the Prime Minister has achieved one thing. He has gained time—though perhaps not very much. He has managed to defer a general election. That was his purpose, his single purpose. He had no interest in the Liberal Party's prospects of the Liberal Party.

It is not Mr Callaghan who has deluded himself, but Mr Steel with his notion of chocolate soldiers, now rigged out as a "Bourgeois" Liberal administration, and their affectations of power. If there were reasons last Saturday for suggesting (as I did) that David Steel had probably succeeded in dislodging the Liberals, the evidence has since become all the stronger, and not only because of Stechford.

Mr Steel's act of collaboration may indeed have wrecked the Liberals as a distinctive independent force. While there are members of the Liberal Party who uphold his decision there are—I repeat—many people of liberal disposition who reject it and feel deeply offended by the compromise. This foretells a net loss for the Liberal Party, not a net gain.

Lord Hailsham was speaking about the alliance (or rather misalliance) in Oxford the other night. He is the best (and I hope not the last) of our Tory philosophers. As he said, the Conservatives have now become the only national Opposition party, and will remain so until an election with the annihilation of the Liberals.

Recognizing the dangers contained in the strange partnership, Lord Hailsham also recognized the opportunities for the Tories. Perhaps the faithfulness will now come on to them too.

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## An occasional series on new words and new meanings

### Why such an unkind word for the old?

Other ages and cultures have respected and indeed venerated old age. Present society in the United Kingdom and especially the United States has made a golden calf of youth, and is consequently embarrassed by the subject of old age. We are terribly frightened of growing old and young, and into periphrasis and euphemism when we try to talk about them. The Victorian middle classes were embarrassed by sex; and went to the absurd extremities of covering up their legs and referring to trousers as "unmentionables". According to the old adage, the old are shut away from society as though the disease of age were infectious. To say that somebody has passed over or passed on or passed away is a chilly euphemism.

And now there is a fashion for using geriatric as though it were a jocular and somehow less depressing synonym for old. Geriatrics comes from two Greek words meaning old age and "relating to the physician", and means the branch of medicine or of social science dealing with the needs of old people. It was coined in the *New York Medical Journal* of 1909 as the opposite of paediatrics. Gerontology is a related word meaning the scientific study of old age and the process of ageing. The word is used, however, in a clearly defined and useful meaning as an adjective: concerned with the medical care of the old. But it is being widely misapplied as if it meant merely old or very old or amusingly old, because a long, learned

word is felt to be less brutally precise than a common short one. Cardinal Basil Hume, the Archbishop of Westminster, claimed in an interview on his appointment that he was a geriatric squash player. He looked a remarkably fit and healthy man. But possibly he can be given the benefit of the doubt, and assumed to have been using the word correctly. Perhaps the local paper that referred to geriatric high jinks at an old people's home was using the word soberly and advisedly, and understood what it was saying. But when a motoring correspondent wrote the other day of a geriatric car battery, the time had come to cry: "Hold, hold enough!"

Philip Howard

## An astonishing vintage year for Moselle, but take care

How often do we hear of the "Wine of the Century", even when the century has lots of life in it yet? We can all think of plenty of those, and possibly most notoriously the 1939s in Bordeaux. Promotion gimmicks, we say, and look away.

As March fades into April with all the grim skies and raw bite to it, the wines are in along the Moselle. They are in cask in dripping cellars, with the non-return gas vents still in the bungholes as the fermentation comes to rest. And those in charge already know that the 1976 vintage are the best since 1921. They are indeed astonishing.

The Moselle valley is a spectacular place, lofty and precipitous. The great wide river, turbid and swollen like all European rivers now sweeps down its sinuous course. This course, like Kipling's, would make a tapestry giddy.

The river is flanked on either side by a grey glacial of vineyards rising high into the sky, crowned by a ragged forest of black pine forests. Here and there along the banks nestle little villages whose names are household words—Urzig, Whelen, Piesport, Reil, with big brother Berncastel about the middle.

Up the top of the river, at the Luxembourg border, lies Trier, near the confluence of the two massive tributaries of the Ruwer and the Saar amid even more spectacular scenery—and some more famous names, such as Ockfener, Sarrabus, Serrig. And the whole lot, apart from the more unpromising north-facing slopes, is one huge vineyard.

Unlike the Douro, it is not terraced. The vineyards are steep, but continuous. They are intersected with service roads along the contours here and there, and the stakes to which the vines are trained run always in precise rows up and down hill.

The properties are usually small, and highly individual as is well known. The nomenclatures, confusing at first sight, are basic and logical even if sesquipedalian. First the village, then the vineyard, then the grape, then the quality. These are the clues that show the degree of selectivity, culminating in the accolades of Trockenbeerenauslese or Eiswein.

For those who are not masters of wine, these two terms denote: individually selected grapeberries allowed to have contracted the Noble Rot that has dehydrated and so concentrated them, and grapes that have remained on the vines till frozen when they were picked and the ice left in the press so that once more the juice was concentrated.

There was no Eiswein in 1976, for reasons I will tell. But first I should mention that the name Trockenbeerenauslese has been modified by the new wine law of 1971. By these the appellations are basically grouped in districts known as *Bereiche*. Thus the Moselle is divided into four, the best known perhaps being the *Nahe* and *Rheingau*. Below these are the *Bereiche* and *Rebgebiete*, Obermosel, Berncastel, Piesport and Saar-Ruwer at the top.

Individual small holdings too numerous to classify are grouped into joint appellations so that some well-known names disappear into larger units of

terminology. Thus there may be changes—but the wine remains the same.

Or more or less the same. The Moselle has been said to be all planned with the Riesling grape. In future a regulated growth of others will be recognized.

Now the 1976 is nearly ready for us. It is a small crop—the long hot summer scorching and concentrated the grapes on the stem—but a wonderfully rich one. So rich and concentrated that the gathering had to be very early if there were to be enough juice left to make wine at all. So no grapes remained to be frozen into Eiswein.

In such a year all the grapes are, as it were, upgraded in the scale of selection so that the simple Qualitätswein (if simple is the word) would be as great as a Spätlese, and so on. And at the top end of the scale, for instance, a 1976 Ockfener Trockenbeerenauslese drawn from its half-cask for tasting seemed so concentrated and charged and insipid that it resembled a liqueur more than a Moselle.

The Beerenauslese of the same vintage more than kept the delicacy and fresh character of the true Moselle wine.

In a short time they will be bottled. And here 1976 sets a problem. German wines, not only Moselles, are usually bottled in Germany. And the skills and standards of surgical asepsis and chemical cleanliness have to be exceedingly high; if not, disasters can easily happen.

With virtually all bottling done at source, the skills and care are over-stressed, and for some wines a cunning way round this has been in practice—"hot bottling". It is called. The wine is virtually pasteurized to kill the yeasts, at 68 degrees C. For common table wines such as Liebfraumilch and the like this does not affect the taste.

But for the Qualitätswein and better this is not so good. It will certainly be drinkable after a few months in bottle, but being biologically dead will not keep and will go flat and dull and will, in fact, deteriorate. A vintage such as 1976, which is so good, is not to be kept and treasured and sampled over the years as it is a fragrant memory—it was not. So an urgent problem has arisen, for in such a great vintage universally the cold-bottling skills will not go round, and the wine will have to be drunk as soon as possible.

Only the great or highest quality houses can do the job and all will be hard-pressed to do justice to these glorious wines. The purchaser will have to be careful and learn the little marks in the glass of the bottle which denote cold-bottling—and he will have to trust his grower and shipper more than ever.

In off years the lesser wines are packed off to be blown up into Sek—this sparkling wine. In 1976-77 the lesser wines are good wines, the good wines great, and the great and selected ones are, and are likely to remain, beyond compare. No Sek this year.

Reginald Bennett

The author is chairman of the House of Commons Catering Committee.

## A two-horse race for the control of off-course betting

### Sportsview

No recent controversy has excited the cognoscent of the gambling scene more than the lively dispute now being fought over the future of betting on horseracing, a subject on which the Royal Commission on Gambling will soon have to make up its mind.

The protagonists are, in one corner, the Horserace Totalisator (Tote) Board, flamboyantly represented by its persuasive chairman, Mr Woodrow Wyatt, and, in the other, the collected bookmakers and betting offices of Britain, relying on quiet persuasion rather than colourful publicity.

At stake is the right to run most of Britain's £1,500m-a-year betting business. The Tote, a statutory body, wants to take over most of the private sector—a "beautiful nationalisation". As Mr Wyatt has described it, "Not unexpectedly, the private bookmakers do not want to be nationalized."

There are about 14,000 betting shops in the United Kingdom (excluding Northern Ireland), 3,000 of them being owned by the "Big Four"—Ladbrokes, William Hill, Mecca and Joe Coral. The remainder belongs to smaller, often localized groups, and family or one-man concerns. Some bookmakers also operate as racetrack bookies, but on-course betting makes up only about 6 per cent of bookmakers' business.

The Tote was originally established to give the punter an alternative to betting with bookmakers at fixed odds known beforehand. It works on the pool principle, with the total stake money invested on the race, less administration expenses and duties. The odds at which he has in fact bet are not therefore known until after the race.

Since 1972 the Tote has been allowed to carry on general bookmaking activities in direct competition with private bookmakers, and it now has more than 100 betting shops. It is possible to place a bet with

the Tote at fixed odds, and, conversely, some bookmakers will accept bets with them at Tote odds.

Why does the Tote want to nationalize the bookmakers? First, it claims that bookmakers, and especially the Big Four, are making inordinate profits, which they do not plough back into racing. The Tote itself is statutorily obliged to apply its profits to the sport.

Secondly, Mr Wyatt vehemently accuses the Big Four of using profits made from their betting activities to "build hotels, draglines, casinos, bingo halls, and other amusements." The Tote, in its evidence to the Royal Commission, suggested that the four made just under £21m profit from their betting shops.

It is difficult to know what the real figure is, only because the accounts of the conglomerates do not show up their betting profits separately. Mr Eric Morley, chairman of the Betting Office Licencees Association, has said that the Big Four's net betting profits were just over £8m.

According to the most informed survey of bookmakers' profits, in the evidence to the Royal Commission of Mr Phil Bull, one of racing's most influential figures, the pre-tax profit of the Big Four was put in the region of 3 per cent of stakes placed with them or 11 per cent after tax. That would not seem to bear out the claim that extravagant profits are being made. Perhaps unexpected, those percentages appear to be about the same for other bookmakers, their size making little difference.

The second main point made by the Tote is that if it has a monopoly of off-course betting (it is willing to allow bookmakers to continue operating on-course betting) it could pro-

vide as much as £35m a year for racing.

At present, of the £1,500m stake money placed on betting annually, the Government gets about £10m in duty. The racing industry, mainly by way of levy paid by bookmakers, benefits by a £10m a year, a figure almost universally felt to be far too low to sustain the sport at the high standard which it has enjoyed in the past, and to make it worthwhile for owners, breeders and trainers to continue participating in it.

The Tote's proposals, on the surface, would seem to be the answer to racing's prayers, by providing the money needed to overcome the industry's economic difficulties.

The bookmakers, and, indeed, most of the sporting press and many other experts on racing, are not persuaded. Quite apart from the social and employment implications (the Tote would close down some 6,000 betting shops), they have a fundamental objection to a system which would not allow the punter to shop around for the best odds he can get.

The lack of competition would effectively mean that the Tote could impose on the betting public not only what shops they could bet at but also what returns they would get and what kinds of bets they could place.

The Tote has promised that if it took over off-course betting it would retain all the kinds of multiple bets and combination bets now available, and would also keep open some non-economic shops in areas badly served for betting facilities.

The bookmakers do not believe that it will be able to do so, and point to other nationalized industries—the Post Office and the railways, for example, where there has been a steady decline in the

service given to the public. They fear that the Tote would be forced eventually to keep only their profitable betting shops and provide only a minimal variety of bets.

One of the many side-issues revolves around whether the punter gets a better return betting at Tote odds or at starting prices. There is no clear answer. Both sides make claims, but the result depends largely on what criteria are used.

Without pretending to absolute statistical accuracy I conducted a survey of 200 recent races. On bets for a win, while the Tote offered a better return in slightly more than half of them, the starting price odds gave slightly better total return for a £1 investment in each race. Betting on a horse for a place was clearly more advantageous with the Tote.

To the average punter, however, the important distinction between the two is that when he bets with the bookmakers, he knows what odds he is getting before the race, and therefore what his return will be if he wins. That degree of certainty is one of the main factors for the relative popularity of placing money at Tote odds, which attracts, it is estimated, only between 3 per cent and 5 per cent of all stake money.

The Tote hopes to improve this ratio by a computerization programme which, eventually, will tell the punter before the race approximately what he will win, as is the case with bookmakers' odds.

The view in government circles—subject to the Royal Commission's conclusions—is that the Tote has neither proved the need for nationalization, nor is it capable of running all off-course betting at this stage. As Mr Denis Howell, Minister for Sport, told Mr Wyatt at a recent luncheon: "You're not to show you can deliver the goods first."

Marcel Berlins

## Solitude and faith have transformed the Coptic monasteries

Reaching the four Coptic Monasteries at Wadi Natrum either from Alexandria or Cairo implies an easy run of about two hours by car on the desert roads. There are no hills, no such as those near the Pyramids at Giza, where rocks rear their heads—grey at dawn, purplish at dusk.

At Wadi Natrum, the tableland is flat and the sand can be hard or soft with low lying marshes; the so-called lakes full of soda and salt are now more exploited.

The horizon firmly kisses the blonde sand. The road appears fragile, a thin, lean line which sandstorms cover in an instant. There is water, though, and small plantations have been established, and irrigation helps the Eucalyptus to flourish.

Nevertheless, already in the fourth century, men planted in this forbidden spot a few pockets of Christianity, monasteries combined with a fortress within their walls. Not only at Wadi Natrum but all over Upper, Lower Egypt and the Sinai peninsula the miracle of Coptic monasticism peopled these deserts. It was the expression of a vibrant Islamic conquest in the 600s AD.

But in spite of the seas of Moslemism encompassing it, centuries of darkness, pillages and destruction of ruins tell of its past existence, a vestigial flame remained and survived nearly 2,000 years. Quite articulate in the Middle East, over three million Christian Copts survive.

The Copts are the direct descendants of the Egyptians, and their flowering in the past was sandwiched between the Greco-Roman period and the arrival of the Moslems. Paganism, when Christianity started, was a civilization in decline when Christianity started. Conversion was followed by the Fourth Century it was established and the Copts took to this new religion even if they were later through Monophysism.

Alexandria, of course, was the seat of doctrine while in the monasteries mystics, and recluses carried out their lives. Perov explains their activities: "On the one hand they prayed, on the other, monks, often simple fellahs, worked to survive. They became builders, labourers, basket makers, the faith burnt fiercely, fed by tradition, sacrifices, visions; no theologians were ever nurtured among them."

They lived half hermitic lives and left their cells and caves only once a week to attend long religious services rather as on Mount Athos today. Their hegemony, their solitude, was not to benefit them psychologically. The weekly mass was followed by the "agape", a meal taken in common. Their feeling for life itself and their role in Egypt could be compared to the "oeuvre" of our medieval monks in Europe, in regard to faith only, as in Egypt survival was at the expense of science and poetry.

Still their codex and manuscripts have been eagerly collected by the West. Started by Robert Curzon, who in 1837, at the age of 27, visited the Wadi Natrum monasteries, diving into caves, saw vellum manuscripts lying about covering jam jars and opening the heart of old Egypt with his rosoglio. He was allowed to leave laden with Coptic manuscripts. Ever since the plunder has gone on and our museums are full of over a thousand Syriac and Coptic treasures.

Slowly Egyptian hieroglyphs dwindled and were replaced by Greek to which eventually the Copts added seven signs of their own. They wrote on papyrus, flat stones, pottery and parchment. It is unwise to think of a deformation of the Ptolemaic period in art, for instance: it is more of a transformation borrowing from the Greeks, the Romans, later the Byzantines, such as the basket work of capitals now in the Coptic museum in Cairo.

This transformation—in sculpture, for instance—is derived from a deep seated feeling about rebirth. It was easy to turn Egyptian Gods into the Roman Dionysus and Isis into Aphrodite. From this theme, where Isis nurses Horus it was nothing much for the Copts to picture Mary feeding the infant Jesus, thus composing the Pagan symbolism.

What is it that one seeks when visiting the Wadi Natrum monasteries, apart from the fascination of seeing very ancient monuments, although they have little beauty, unity or artistic feel.

It is no doubt the extraordinary fact of encountering living entities which without a break in continuity, have kept alive a Christian faith since the fourth century.

About two or three miles from the main road right into the Wadi, a forbidding cream-grey complex appears, surrounded by an arched wall. It is Dur el Qaryun. As one approaches, palm trees flutter their dusty branches by a modern belfry, and a square keep emerges a little higher than the 12 metre high wall surrounding the monastery buildings and churches. These are low lying chapels, barrel shaped and domed.

A cross surmounts the stark looking door and when pulled a bell tinkles. A long wait is followed by the opening of the door when a black robed monk takes the letter of introduction asked for in Cairo from the Coptic Patriarchate. This has been from time immemorial the open sesame to the monasteries.

The amiable black robed monk explains little. One refers to Dorothea Russell's splendid descriptions of these keeps, refectories and chapels. In her book *Medieval Cairo and the Wadi Natrum Monasteries* there, monks still chant, standing under faded and rough frescoes reminiscent of the rhapsodic churches of Cappadocia facing a line of high pul-

pis carrying breviaries in Coptic. The frescoes are peeling, the carpets are frayed, the bones of the founder saints covered in dust. In the old draperies in dusty life coffins travel from the winter to the summer churches.

They are respectfully touched by monks and pilgrims, and it rather makes one conscious of the rite-loving Russians at Zagorsk and Vladimir Kissing. Occasionally the Glebs and the Boris iconostasis in the iconostasis of cathedrals. At Bishoi the monks venerate the Tree of Ephraim, a Tamarisk of great age, surrounded by a wall. Near-by is a Roman wall where legend has it that swords dripping with the blood of 40 martyrs venerated at Abu Makar, the most important of the Wadi Natrum monasteries, were cleaned and purified.

A totally different atmosphere permeates this monastery. Founded by Macarius round the 350's it shared the fate of the other three, Baranous, Bishoi and Sureyna. It was rebuilt in the ninth and the eleventh centuries and housed many Canobites and Anchorites through the ages.

Obviously, a renewal of faith and desire for solitude has gripped a number of Copts who have come recently from all walks of life. They have transformed the monastery through always within the walls.

A great hall for conferences has been built, the library is going to be used as a library and modern machinery being screened by a new wall within the enclosure.

Alas, this renewal has somehow engulfed physically ancient chapels. If not razed they are certainly blanketed within new grey concrete walls. But the great charm of the Wadi Natrum Monasteries is disappearing as the "renewal" perhaps is more important.

Marie-Noelle Kelly





New Printing House Square, London, WC1X 8EZ/Telephone: 01-837 1234

## A SUBURB OF CRAFTSMEN

The Stechford by-election is obviously a very severe blow to the Lib/Lab pact. It is not necessarily a fair representation of general public opinion. Stechford is only one constituency, and attitudes to the pact may vary from one part of the country to another, but it is the first opportunity that a parliamentary electorate has had to pass judgment and they have passed it most emphatically.

It is true that the Liberal candidate, Mr Gopps, did not himself initially sympathise with the pact and floundered in trying to adjust his campaign to it. Yet he was a well established Liberal candidate, with a first-class organization supporting him, in a constituency he had contested at the previous General Election. He polled less than half the votes that he had won at the last General Election whereas the actual Conservative vote increased by some 40 per cent.

Mr Steel's pact with Mr Callaghan is the third such venture of conditional support in the history of the Liberal Party. The first was Mr Asquith's decision to put Ramsay MacDonald in as the first Labour Prime Minister in 1924. The second was the support that Lloyd-George gave to the second Ramsay MacDonald government in 1929. Both times Liberal support was necessary to allow a minority Labour government to conduct its business, and both could be justified in terms of the need to carry on the government of the country. In both cases the electoral results were disastrous for the Liberal Party. The election of 1924 produced a large Conservative majority and a collapse in Liberal membership of the House of Commons, which fell from 159 to 40. The 1929 parliament ended with the Liberals split and produced an enormous majority for a Conservative-dominated coalition. Liberal representation in the House of Commons has never recovered from the 1924 defeat.

The historical parallels do, therefore, show that Mr Steel has taken a very big risk in supporting a minority Labour Government; all the bigger because it is also an unpopular Government. At first it seemed that the Liberals might gain support as a result of their increased credibility. The Liberals are now seen to have an

influence on the decisions of government and to be involved in the making of national policy for the first time since 1945. A considerable number of Liberal supporters have rallied to the pact because they see the advantage of it. The disadvantage however is equally clear. A proportion of Liberal voters, usually thought to be rather over half, consists of voters who would normally vote Conservative if there were no Liberal candidate in their constituency. If they vote Liberal now they are voting for the maintenance of the Labour Government in office, not merely for a limited period but indefinitely. Mr Steel has been talking a though he saw the pact lasting for a considerable period of time until the economic situation had improved, perhaps in 1978 or perhaps even later.

Voters who want to get the Government out cannot be expected to vote for Liberal candidates who will keep the Government in, and the evidence at Stechford is that they refuse to do so. Some ex-Liberal voters may have voted for the National Front candidate who beat the unfortunate Liberal in the fourth place. These are the pure protest voters who cannot protest against the Government by voting for a party which is supporting the Government. Others undoubtedly switched their votes to the Conservatives.

The Stechford result is not going to make the Liberal members of the present parliament any the more keen to precipitate a General Election. That is certain. Yet at the same time the future of the Lib/Lab pact depends upon its success. If it seems merely to be a way of postponing the evil day then it is likely to be eroded on both sides. Only if it can be seen as a way of producing a successful national policy will it have enough life in it to survive for more than a few months.

Unfortunately for that prospect, the Stechford result is equally bad news for government policy. The question is whether the large class of people who have been discriminated against by the incomes policy, a class typified by the toolmakers of British Leyland, are going to accept another year of progressive reduction in their differentials and their standard of living.

Already the evidence from the Trade Union movement is that they are not. Stechford provides political evidence of the same kind.

The Stechford constituency is a constituency of skilled, rather than unskilled, workers and lower grades of management. It has been a Labour stronghold because of the strongly industrial character of the work done by the people who live in Stechford, but it is a suburb of craftsmen. That indeed lends particular interest to its verdict. The Stechford result shows exactly the same thing as the British Leyland strike; that there is a deep resentment among this large and important social group against a policy which has advanced the interests of the unskilled at the expense of the skilled. It is appropriate that Mr Jack Jones, the true architect of this policy, came to campaign in Stechford and had very little notice taken of him. It was Mr Jack Jones who made the last two years' incomes policy a policy for the unskilled, and he did so because the Transport and General Workers' Union has so broad an unskilled membership.

It is becoming more clear that there is neither the trade union nor the political support for a genuine Phase III of the incomes policy in the mould of Phase I and Phase II. There may well be a paper policy—a signature on a document—but paper policies tend to be even more unfair in their effects than incomes policies which have a real and general effect. A weak incomes policy which is widely evaded is bitterly resented by those who do accept it, or are forced to do so.

We have always considered it desirable that the question of Phase III should be determined by the present government. The experiment of the social contract should now be completed. We need to know whether a genuine Phase III under the Social Contract can be achieved, and if it is achieved in name we need to know whether it is real or bogus. Stechford suggests that it cannot be achieved; that it simply does not have the national support which is needed. Stechford also suggests that Liberals are likely to pay a very heavy penalty for having involved themselves in a process of government they are not in a position to control.

## Liberal pact with Labour

From Lord Gladwyn  
Sir, Professor Hayek, that great prophet of what President Giscard d'Estaing calls "old-fashioned Liberalism", and hero of our more right-wing Tories, believes that no Liberal can now vote "Liberal"—thanks to the British Liberal Party's (justified) support of a British Socialist Government (Letters, March 31).

I suggest that the British political scene as contemplated from an ivory tower in Freiburg becomes rather distorted. The whole point of the recent arrangement was to discourage, not to facilitate, the passage of Socialist measures of which two-thirds of the country disapprove.

Incidentally, would the Professor maintain that the German Free Democrats, who are now in a coalition with Socialists, should no longer receive any "Liberal" support?

Yours faithfully,  
GLADWYN,  
Lords.

From Mr Andrew Phillips  
Sir, Professor Hayek (March 31) has it wrong. The Liberal Party is not keeping "a socialist government in power" but only a Labour government in office. The difference is both real and profound.

ANDREW PHILLIPS,  
Prospective Liberal Parliamentary Candidate,  
Saffron Walden Constituency  
Liberal Association,  
89 Bradford Street,  
Bocking,  
Essex,  
March 31.

## Loan for Mentmore

From the Chairman of the National Art Collections Fund  
Sir, Your announcement (March 31) that the National Art Collections Fund had agreed to participate up to £250,000 in an interest-free loan needs further elucidation lest your readers should think that we are using our carefully husbanded funds in a reckless manner.

The executive committee feel so strongly that Mentmore and its contents should be saved for the nation that at this eleventh hour it has offered to lend the Government £250,000, one quarter of the Fund's free capital, on condition that it is repaid in five annual instalments. The total cost to the Fund of this interest-free loan would be about £75,000. If the auction sale goes forward the NACF might easily find itself in the position of being asked to contribute such a sum towards the purchase of a few outstanding pictures and pieces of furniture.

Under the terms of our charter our loan would have to be linked with the acquisition of some of the works of art, and we would have to be assured that the house would be open to the public as a museum or in the same manner as a National Trust house, and that the works of art would be properly maintained.

In taking this lead the Fund hopes that other institutions, with a hundred times the NACF's resources, will also produce an interest-free loan, and that if there is any shortfall it will be made up by a further contribution from the Government.

Yours faithfully,  
BRINSLEY FORD,  
National Art Collections Fund,  
14 Wyndham Place, W1,  
April 1.

## Human rights in Korea

From the General Secretary of the Korea Committee  
Sir, The extensive coverage given in recent issues of *The Times* to affairs in South Korea is welcome. Your correspondent (Peter Hazelhurst, March 23 and 24) quotes former President Yoon Po Sun as saying that "in South Korea, we are living in a police state", and complaining that "The British Government has not lifted a finger to champion human rights in this country." Yoon Po Sun believes that the British contribution to the war in Korea a generation ago gave Britain a strong position from which to make representations to Seoul on such matters.

Another factor—although Yoon does not mention it—which should strengthen the British voice is that, of the original United Nations contingent that fought in Korea, only the Americans, British and Filipinos now remain. The British contingent, however small, is an important symbol of British support to the Park regime.

Yet, although the British official record is one of unconditional support for the "police state" that South Korea has become, there is reason to believe that the conscience of the British public is not insensitive to the plight of democrats in South Korea. A petition calling for the release of political prisoners and the restoration of democracy was signed last December by a group of 34 Members of Parliament and a considerable number of prominent British academics, artists, union leaders and men of religion, and sent to President Park and to the British Government.

It is to be hoped that your present series of articles will help to generate wider public pressure on the British Government to reconsider its Korea policy.

Yours sincerely,  
GAVAN MCCORMACK,  
General Secretary,  
Korea Committee,  
101 Gower Street, WC1.

## The Budget: freezing prices

From Mr Tim Fortescue

Sir, In his Budget speech the Chancellor said that the Government intended "to prevent any unreasonable profit mark-up" by retaining margin control and "by taking a new power to freeze a particular price for up to a year when an independent investigation shows this to be justified". This must have sounded reasonable, since no subsequent speaker commented.

The purpose of my letter to you, Sir, is to point out that the Chancellor's words differ significantly from the proposals for price control published by the Secretary of State for Prices and Consumer Protection which provide for a three-month price freeze, pending investigation. We have no way of knowing which of the Government's two voices we are to believe.

In his consultative document *New Prices Policy* issued on February 22, Mr Battersley announced that when the Price Commission decided to investigate a pre-notified price increase the price which it was proposed to increase would remain frozen for three months (beginning from the date on which the investigation was announced).

No question of justification for the freeze (as proposed by the Chancellor) arises here. It will be a matter of shoot first and ask questions afterwards. The freeze is to be imposed without reason or explanation, and three months later a commission can express its regrets, report that there was no justification for it, and allow the price increase. The company concerned has lost three months' legitimate income: and there is no redress.

The Food and Drink Industries Council has ruled Mr Battersley that such arbitrary power in the hands of a non-elected body is intolerable in a free society. We have had no response; but the Chancellor seems to have taken the point. We must now assume either that Mr Battersley has made a concession or that the Chancellor has got it wrong. There are unfortunately more precedents for the latter assumption than for the former.

Yours faithfully,  
TIM FORTESCUE,  
Secretary General, Food and Drink Industries Council,  
10 Colindale Lane, SW1,  
March 31.

## The Queen in Australia

From Mr Humphry Berkeley  
Sir, By inclination, I am a republican. However, the incomparable grace, dedication, and constitutional propriety which Her Majesty has bestowed upon the peoples whom in name she rules, but in fact she serves, has endowed the monarchy with a value which, at least, would wish to see preserved. The occasional but refreshingly breezy indiscretions which Prince Philip commits can only cause offence to those who are both pompous and without humour. Like you, I greatly welcome the success of her tour of Australia, despite the fact that there were occasional demonstrations against the Crown by a small minority.

I agree with your leader (March 31) in which you expressed the view that Sir John Kerr, the Governor-General, might have been asked to retire from office before the Royal visit, for it was against him and not against the Queen that the animosity was directed. Since the Governor-General of Australia is appointed by Her Majesty on the advice of the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr Malcolm Fraser must also be criticised, since Sir John Kerr could have been replaced by him before the tour, in which event there might have been no demonstrations at all.

It is at this point that I dissent from your view that Sir John Kerr is in a position to dismiss Mr Cough Whitlam from the office of Prime Minister. If Mr Whitlam had known what Sir John Kerr intended to do before they met, he could have preempted this by the simple device of picking up his telephone

## Conservative devolution

From Sir Andrew Gilchrist  
Sir, Your report in your issue of March 28 that the Conservative Party, moved by Mr Edward Taylor, is likely to make a new approach to devolution by moving the transfer of a good deal of Scottish parliamentary business to regular meetings of Scottish MPs in Edinburgh.

If we are to have any form of devolution at all, this is much the least harmful way of doing it. The problem the proposal seeks to solve is a real one, stemming from the fact that Scotland is at present suffering from too much devolution rather than from too little. The delegation of administrative powers which exists in respect of Scotland, in the form of the Scottish Office and its ministers, is unmatched elsewhere in the United Kingdom; and it may well be that it is not subject to adequate political supervision.

A Scottish MP spends 70 per cent of his time at Westminster and 30 per cent at his constituency, while the Scottish Office does 99 per cent of its work in Edinburgh. Mr Taylor's proposal is that for a great deal of this devolved business, there should be devolved political supervision.

One great advantage of using existing Scottish MPs to provide this supervision is that it avoids the need for any new elected assembly. Members of such an assembly would inevitably act as a lever for more central government, thus duplicating the work of MPs proper and so leading to unnecessary confusion. Mr Taylor's meetings should above all be businesslike; the idea of a special

Agriculture in England has suffered a very long wet winter demanding costly cultivations for the preparation of spring seed beds. Costs in expensive machinery, particularly in the north, have been high; and very costly in fuel consumption.

Also, it is sadly traditional that a Socialist Chancellor has little knowledge of our large industry, agriculture, but it is aberrant that the Minister who represents agriculture has no experience of farming, is a declared protagonist of cheap food, and we in the industry would seem to be unrepresented in government—hierarchy by any minister who understands our problems. Has the Chancellor even made aware of this additional inflationary charge to the British food producer?

Yours faithfully,  
IAN C. MACDONALD,  
Higher Hill Farm,  
Budeigh,  
Glastonbury,  
Somerset,  
March 30.

From Mrs N. Inge  
Sir, According to your tax tables for "Married Couples, Income earned" in the event of agreement on a new phase of pay policy, tax changes will reduce the tax of those earning £2,000 a year by £64.50—just over £1 a week and of those earning £25,000 by £916.20, nearly £18 a week. Any taxpayers who support a deal like this must surely need to have his head examined!

Yours faithfully,  
N. INGE,  
324 Euston Road,  
Furness Vale, via Stockport,  
Cheshire,  
March 31.

From Mr David G. Lindsay  
Sir, Your tables showing the effect of the proposed tax changes reveal that for annual incomes of £7,000 per annum and above, in middle and senior management salaries, the total (not the "per capita" increase in net income for a family of four (including the child benefit) is to be less than the increase for a married (but childless) couple, and in the range £7,000 to £15,000 (the Chancellor's "richest families")—enjoying perhaps, a per capita income of £30 per week gross, is to be less even than the increase for a single person.

This, apparently, is known as "concentrating relief" where it is most needed.

Yours faithfully,  
DAVID G. LINDSAY,  
8 Swanton Field,  
Whitchurch-on-Thames,  
Oxon,  
March 31.

and advising the Queen's private secretary that he should resign. Sir John Kerr's appointment to be terminated. The Queen could not have rejected this advice.

The fact that Mr Malcolm Fraser won a handsome majority (having already been appointed Prime Minister by Sir John Kerr), in the subsequent General Election is irrelevant. If there had been a General Election in the United Kingdom in 1968, or in 1972, or possibly even today, the Government would have been or might be defeated. It is however unthinkable that Her Majesty would dismiss Mr Wilson, Mr Heath, or Mr Callaghan from the post of Prime Minister in these circumstances.

I have felt for a long time that the title Governor-General is to use your own word, "anachronistic" for the Queen's Representative in a fully independent Commonwealth country. It has an inescapably colonial flavour. Viceroy would hardly be more acceptable with its association with the British Raj in India. I venture to suggest that the title "Regent" should be substituted for that of Governor-General to describe the post of the representative of the Crown in those independent Commonwealth countries (by no means all of which are inhabited by people of British stock) which wish the Queen to remain their Head of State. This title has the merit of describing the duties of the Queen's Representative exactly and has no colonial connotation.

Yours faithfully,  
HUMPHRY BERKELEY,  
Three Pages Yard,  
Chiswick, W4,  
March 31.

## Improving life in inner cities

From the Bishop of Birmingham and others  
Sir, The Secretary of State for the Environment is shortly to issue a White Paper containing the Government's proposals for tackling the problems of the inner city. May we urge that in preparing his proposals, consideration be given to the following points:

1. We must cherish what we still have in the inner city, whether it be jobs, homes, or the energies of the people who live there. On Merseyside several large centres of employment have closed in recent months. We need policies, and particularly financial structures, which will protect the businesses already established in these areas and, indeed, help them to expand. Similarly, if rehabilitation of the existing stock of housing is to be effective as an alternative to large-scale clearance, there needs to be a change in the improvement grants system to allow a greater proportion of the grant to be spent on basic repairs.

2. We must recognize that the problems facing these areas cannot be solved by local government acting alone. They need to be tackled collectively, by a co-ordinated effort if necessary establishing ad hoc agencies with resources to generate economic activity not unsuited to the local authority. Collaboration, to be effective, must also include the people living in these areas. We have valuable experience of "citizen participation", particularly in localities which have lost hope. But restoring a sense of morale is not only one of our goals, it is a means immediately to hand, provided we can overcome the situation which has so often, grown up between community groups and local government.

3. We must face squarely the need for positive discrimination, in the process of decline in these areas is to be halted and reversed. As we accept that there are other areas of need outside the metropolitan conurbations, whatever resources are made available, it is important that procedures for allocating them should be well understood, speedy, and applied locally.

Yours faithfully,  
LAURENCE BIRMINGHAM,  
DAVID LIVERPOOL,  
ALAN SOUTHAMPTON,  
Church House,  
Dean's Yard, SW1,  
April 1.

## Murder in Cambodia

From Mr A. M. Spooner  
Sir, When Mr. Levin trying to prove his article on Cambodia? That Communism is evil and that we in the West have a monopoly of virtue?

The events that he describes are similar in spirit, if not in scale, to recent events in Uganda. The Khmer Rouge murder in the name of Communism. Idi Amin Dada murders in the name of Islam. The choice of which anti-imperialist creed to follow is purely a matter of historical circumstance. We do not condemn Islam because the faith is perverted in Uganda.

Why does Mr. Levin dwell on the brutality of the Khmer Rouge soldiers? Communism as an ideology is not to blame for the atrocity caused by armed conflict. The brutalizing effect of warfare is well documented; the ruthless interference of the pilot to those he kills in the air, the then the more personal forms of brutality displayed by the low-technology Khmer Rouge. We should not feel culturally and morally superior because we have the capability to massacre by remote control the Balearic Islands.

Yours faithfully,  
A. M. SPOONER,  
45 Canfield Gardens, NW6.

## A flight of butterflies

From Mr Douglas Cottrill  
Sir, The letter from your Malloren contributor (March 31) is very intriguing. He was right to be a little incredulous, but only so far as the identity of the butterflies is concerned. I am certainly very glad to think that whatever he saw had been able to survive the insecticides.

It is very difficult to hazard a guess at the actual identity of the insects he saw. The Heath Fritillary (*Melitaea athalia*) has never been recorded from the Balearic Islands and would in any case not have emerged at this date even in neighbouring Spain. In fact no *Melitaea* or *Melitoides* is recorded from the Balearics, nor would any fly normally anywhere in Spain earlier than May (*M. aetherea*) which is very local in the extreme South around Algeciras.

I would expect the only butterfly of any other size and colour of a small fritillary flying in Mallorca in March to be the small local form of *Lesimnata megera* referred to as *intermedia* Muschamp or *paramegera* Ruebner, but your correspondent's description of their flight characteristics does not really seem to fit that species.

If he could capture one specimen it would be possible to solve the mystery by his taking a photograph. Yours sincerely,  
DOUGLAS COTTRILL,  
Greenbank,  
Colford, East Devon.

## Flattering flora

From Mr M. E. Hayward  
Sir, There has been a lot of talk on the radio and television and in the *Times* about the wonderful response of flowers and vegetables to encouraging talk and beautiful music. Can any expert in these matters please tell me why, when I go down my garden and say rude things to weeds, they do not wither and perish?

Yours,  
M. E. HAYWARD,  
Sunny Bank,  
Shoreham Road,  
Oxford, Kent.

## ONE BAD SYSTEM AND TWO POSSIBLE ONES

A "white paper with green edges" we were promised. A green paper with white spots is what Mr Rees and Dr Owen have given us. As Mr Callaghan warned (or promised) in the Commons last week, the White Paper on direct elections to the European Assembly, published yesterday, sets out the choice between different electoral systems but makes no recommendation. "Each of these possibilities", it says, "has some attractions; but each also presents serious difficulties. Before coming to a conclusion on this, the Government wishes to listen to the views expressed in Parliament and elsewhere."

The possibilities in question are four: the traditional British simple majority system with single-member constituencies (which last year's select committee recommended); a list system of proportional representation "probably on a regional basis"; the single transferable vote; and a combination of one of these with the "compulsory dual mandate", which would mean that only members of the House of Commons (why not the House of Lords, as at present?) would be eligible. In other words the fourth option is not an alternative to the other three but has to be the subject of a separate decision.

The arguments for the compulsory dual mandate mentioned in the White Paper are of a kind more likely to impress party leaders and chiefs of whip than the general public. It would "minimise the risk of divergences between Westminster members and other Party", and without it Assembly members "might regard themselves as owing a primary allegiance to European rather than national Parties". The arguments against are much stronger: the growing pressure of business both at Westminster and in Strasbourg, the difficulty of finding eighty-one West-

minster MPs with the time and energy to spare, and the question of what to do when a European MP loses his Westminster seat. One might add that the general purpose of direct elections would not be served by making the European Parliament a place to which only members of the existing political club can have access; and if it is felt desirable (as that European MPs once elected should keep in close touch with events at Westminster, there are various other ways in which this could be achieved (the most formal being to give them ex officio membership of the House of Lords for the duration of their mandate).

Clearly the more serious choice is between the three different electoral systems. The arguments against using a simple majority system for European elections have been rehearsed often enough in these columns, and it is very heartening to see them at last being given due weight by the Government. No doubt calculations of party advantage or disadvantage (the thought that a mid-term election in eighty-one single-member constituencies would be rather like eighty-one simultaneous Stechford by-elections) have concentrated the Government's mind; it should be further concentrated now by Mr Callaghan's promise last week "to take full account of the Liberal Party's commitment" to a proportional system, and by the knowledge that if that promise is broken the Government will no longer have a parliamentary majority. It should also be noticed that the only positive statement of intent in the White Paper is that, whatever happens in the rest of the kingdom, a proportional system will be used in Northern Ireland. The object of this is, of course, to ensure representation of the Catholic minority. But the Unionist majority can hardly be expected to accept that in a

national election Northern Ireland be prevented from voting by the same system as everybody else.

If this is accepted, we are left with a regional list system and STV. A national list system is not seriously considered, apparently because it would involve voting for parties rather than individuals. In the particular form of regional list system which the Government outlines for us (and which appears to be the system recently suggested by Mr Michael Streed) his would be avoided. The elector would cast one vote for a named candidate with or without party affiliation. The total votes cast for all the candidates of each party would be calculated, and the parties allotted seats in proportion to their total share of the poll. Within the parties the seats would be allotted to the named candidates who received most individual votes.

This system seems admirably designed for this particular election. It is considerably less complicated than STV, though in the eyes of Miss Lakeman and her followers it falls short of it in excellence, giving slightly less influence to the voter and slightly more to the parties. The Government suggests that the names of candidates should be listed alphabetically on the ballot-paper, irrespective of party. That would seem to give an undue advantage to candidates whose names begin with A or B. It would be better to put the non-party candidates at the top (to ensure they are not overlooked) and then group the candidates for each party together as a list. It would not even be intolerable to allow the parties to decide the order of their own lists, since the voter would not after all be obliged to respect it. But in any case, either this system or STV would be greatly preferable to the non-proportional "first past the post" system.

has not been caused by central government directly—in indeed, the number of grants available from the Department of Health and Social Security has been increased—but by cuts in local authority expenditure. The remedy, therefore, seems to lie within the power of the local authorities themselves. They are always anxious to preserve their local autonomy and they now have an opportunity to do so. The personal social services are primarily a local responsibility, or so we are frequently told, and "a facilitating social work education is really a major priority" then perhaps local authorities should put their money where their words are.

Yours sincerely,  
KEN JUDGE, Lecturer in Social Administration,  
University of Bristol,  
12 Priory Road,  
Clifton,  
Bristol.

## Social work training

From Mr Ken Judge  
Sir, Mr Tom White (March 25) has put forward a powerful plea for the Government to make available additional funds for training social workers in the next academic year. Although it is indisputable that the present economic situation will have adverse consequences for the development of social work education, it is not self-evident that the Government should be persuaded to give priority support for at least three reasons.

First, because there are so many other legitimate and pressing calls on limited public resources, for example, youth unemployment, the squalor of many inner cities, and raising the tax threshold for low income families. Second, it is arguable that the present complement of qualified social workers is used

inefficiently at higher levels of social work output could be achieved for a given level of expenditure, by greater use of ancillary workers. I have developed this argument elsewhere ("Economic Analysis and Productive Efficiency in the Personal Social Services: The Differential Use of Manpower", *International Journal of Social Economics* Vol. 3, No. 2, 1976), but it is worth remarking that even the General Secretary of the British Association of Social Workers has admitted that too many social workers are "spending a lot of their time doing things for which they are not trained and which other people could do just as well, if not better."

Finally it should be remembered that the maintenance costs of students undertaking social work training, the issue in question, are financed both by central and local government. The present "crisis"







# THE TIMES

## BUSINESS NEWS

كتاب من الأعمال

Personal investment and finance, pages 18 and 19

### Carter energy programme calls for tough action to reduce oil use

From Frank Vogt

Washington, April 1—President Carter's comprehensive energy programme, to be announced on April 20, will contain proposals that are likely to bring big changes in American living styles. The measures are designed to bring about a decline in American demand for foreign oil.

The broad basis of the President's programme is being clarified by White House officials in talks with politicians and reporters. Carter is expected to deal with the size of government subsidies and implementation of several energy schemes have still to be decided by President Carter.

Proposals will seek to increase domestic coal output to more than 1,000 million tons a year by 1985 from the present level of about 655 million tons. These proposals will probably include a temporary suspension of some environmental standards in order to give a spur to strip-mining.

In addition, a scheme is under consideration that would force companies now using natural gas to switch to coal.

Dr. James Schlesinger, the President's special assistant for energy affairs, is considering a number of proposals that will provide financial relief to companies forced to switch from natural gas to coal. Direct subsidies from the Government to major power plants are also being weighed in this context.

In addition, the Administration is considering a plan for the phased decontrol of natural gas prices, which will probably lead to gas becoming the most expensive of all fuels here within five or six years.

The phased decontrol of American oil prices is also contemplated. A decision has been taken, it is believed, that will ensure that decontrol is implemented over a lengthy period of time. The view at the White House is that too sudden a price decontrol would have too much of an inflationary effect.

The President's plans will provide government funds for an accelerated programme of solar energy research. Funds will also be made available to support research into technology likely to produce energy results, either by producing other forms of energy or by conserving energy. Nuclear reactor programmes are to be slowed.

The programme will call for the establishment of a 25 million barrel strategic oil reserve by the end of next year.



Dr. James Schlesinger, considering tax aids for energy conservation.

increasing to 500 million barrels by 1980.

A large part of the President's programme will consist of energy conservation proposals, some of which will involve mandatory requirements. Under consideration, for example, is a scheme that will force all home-owners to ensure that their homes are insulated up to standards set by the federal government.

Payment for this insulation might be through local utility companies and some tax deductions may be allowed individuals partly to offset insulation expenses.

The mandatory home insulation proposals will also be extended to companies, where a series of specific insulation standards are to be issued by the Government. Some tax relief may be offered to companies in this context.

Mr. Carter has still to decide whether or not to favour a large general petrol tax. He is said to be opposed to this, although he may advocate it if opposition in Congress is seen to be too strong in some other conservation areas.

Also under consideration is a plan for a special tax on large general petrol tax. He is said to be opposed to this, although he may advocate it if opposition in Congress is seen to be too strong in some other conservation areas.

The Administration does not intend to modify the tough laws compelling car makers to produce more fuel-efficient models. The companies are being required to produce cars with average consumption of 27 miles per gallon by 1985.

### Devaluation by three Nordic block countries

Brussels, April 1—Sweden, Norway and Denmark, in a snap move tonight devalued their currencies against the other members of the European joint float, or "snake". It was announced tonight.

Mr. Willy de Clercq, Belgian Finance Minister, told a press conference that a meeting of "snake" ministers here had agreed to a 6 per cent devaluation of the Swedish crown and 3 per cent devaluations of the Norwegian and Danish crowns.

The exchange rates of the other "snake" currencies—the Deutschmark, Dutch guilder and Belgian and Luxembourg francs—remain unchanged. Mr. de Clercq said the devaluations are effective from next Monday.

Mr. de Clercq, who chaired the meeting, said the Scandinavian countries had decided to devalue mainly for balance of payments reasons. Despite the changes in their exchange rates the three countries will remain in the "snake" system.

The joint float is a European Community mechanism, but Norway and Sweden are associated members of the "snake".

News of the devaluations came after European foreign exchange markets had closed, but trading halted temporarily in New York as dealers assessed the impact.

### MLR move keeps bill rate in line

By John Whitmore  
Financial Correspondent

The Bank of England's policy of setting the minimum lending rate at 9 per cent on Thursday just succeeded in keeping the weekly Treasury bill tender in line with its wishes yesterday.

But it did not prevent Treasury bills trading in the market at rates envisaging a further cut in MLR before Easter.

In setting MLR at 9 per cent on Thursday, the Bank was aiming to keep the average rate of allotment at the weekly Treasury bill tender in the range 8.75 to 9 per cent.

The average rate of allotment was in fact 8.743 per cent, more than half a per cent down on the previous Friday—and the market-related formula for setting MLR was automatically reactivated.

In subsequent trading, however, three-month bills were changing hands at prices equivalent to a rate of less than 8 per cent—and a rate which, if maintained through to next week's tender, would point to a cut of a further 1 per cent in MLR.

Other interest rates also eased further yesterday. Rates in both the three and six month inter-bank markets continued to slip with rates in both cases hovering only just above the 9 per cent level.

### Equities suffer another bout of profit-taking

By David Mott

The stock market in London ended the week on a low note as both equities and gilts were hit by another round of profit-taking.

The FT ordinary share index closed another 5.9 lower, at 412.5, leaving it 5.6 down over what has been an eventful week. Gilts lost up to 1 p.p. The problem for the equity market is lack of short-term incentive now that interest rates are likely to be pegged at their present level for some time.

In the gilt-edged market the prospect of floating-rate bonds and the new short "tap" gave an early boost to the long date. But the buying was not sufficient to counteract profit-taking.

"Shorts" were lowered by half a point, even though some late buying lifted prices off the bottom.

Application lists for the new short "tap" open on Wednesday and there is expected to be a heavy subscription.

Investor's week, page 19

The Times index: 169.49-2.75  
The FT index: 412.5-6.9

### THE POUND

	Bank	Bank
	buys	sells
Australia \$	1.61	1.56
Austria Sch	30.1	29.1
Belgium F	65.00	62.00
Canada \$	1.85	1.80
Denmark Kr	10.38	9.98
Finland Mk	6.19	6.00
France F	8.75	8.44
Germany DM	4.27	4.05
Greece Dr	64.75	61.75
Hong Kong \$	7.50	7.25
Italy L	153.00	149.00
Japan Y	500.00	475.00
Netherlands Gld	4.45	4.20
Norway Kr	9.36	8.90
Portugal Esc	66.25	64.25
S Africa Rd	1.87	1.74
Spain Pes	12.50	11.50
Sweden Kr	7.50	7.15
Switzerland Fr	4.34	4.22
US \$	1.76	1.71
Yugoslavia Dn	34.25	32.00

Rates for small denominated bank notes only. Excludes sterling. Different rates apply to inter-bank and other foreign currency markets.

American trade restrictions a special case, President says

### Protectionist fears over shoe curbs

From Our United States Economics Correspondent  
Washington, April 1

President Carter today took a rough protectionist stand in deciding the first major international trade issue that he has had to deal with. His decision may lead foreign governments to question the degree to which he is committed to world trade liberalization.

President Carter said he has decided to grant import relief to the American shoe industry. It is very reluctant to restrict imports of shoes from other countries, he said, and added that "only problems as extreme as those faced by the American shoe industry could force me to seek even modest mandatory limits on imports."

Mr. Robert Strauss, United States special representative for trade negotiations, went to considerable lengths at a White House press conference to stress that today's decision should not be seen as any sort of signal to foreign governments on American trade policies. He repeatedly stated that the shoe case was a very special one.

The President said that he has ordered Mr. Strauss to start negotiations immediately with those countries that are the prime shoe exporters to America with the aim of reaching orderly marketing agreements to restrict the degree to which they can export shoes to the United States.

Mr. Strauss said that in these negotiations he would "very definitely" seek to reduce shoe import levels.

The negotiations must be completed within 90 days and they will primarily involve Taiwan and South Korea. The failure of these negotiations could lead President Carter to impose rough quotas and high tariffs on shoe imports.

President Carter noted in a comment clearly designed to assuage foreign fears of increasing protectionism that "over the long haul, the solution to difficulties in the shoe industry lies not in the restriction of imports but elsewhere—in innovation and modernization of our own production facilities and the financing to make these possible."

Mr. Strauss pointed out that shoe imports have more than doubled to nearly 190 million pairs from Taiwan in the last two years, while they have increased from 9 million to more than 40 million pairs from South Korea in this period.

He noted that without government action there would be further large shoe import gains this year. The value of American shoe imports is about \$1,500m (£832m) a year.

President Carter pointed out that because of foreign competition the number of American shoe manufacturing companies has fallen by 40 per cent to 380 firms since 1968, while employment in the industry has declined by 70,000.

He decided to reject a proposal to impose special trade quotas now, in favour of seeking negotiated orderly marketing agreements.

In addition, in an action that some foreign observers may view as indicating a course that this Administration may take towards other United States industries seeking protection, the President said he would propose legislation in the next three months that would provide government assistance to the shoe industry here.

Today's decision might raise fears that foreign countries may retaliate by imposing trade restrictions of their own. Restrictions on shoe imports had on television set imports, which is another matter the President must shortly decide, are widely being viewed as test cases of the Administration's foreign trade policies.

A typical and worrying view of what presidential decisions favouring restrictions could produce was recently noted by Mr. Harold New Cleveland, a prominent New York banker, a vice-president of Citibank, who said that by imposing restrictions the President gave to the world a pretty convincing signal that his Administration will not effectively resist protectionist tactics.

By Derek Harris  
A Price Commission Bill, the enabling legislation for the Government's new price controls policy, was introduced into the House of Commons yesterday by Mr. Hattersley, Secretary of State for Prices and Consumer Protection. Details of the Bill will be published on Monday.

A comparatively simple Bill, has been drafted, renewing the life of the Price Commission beyond July 31. The commission is then expected to get new powers to investigate proposed price increases.

During investigations the price under review will be frozen for between three and five months, and in certain circumstances the freeze could be extended to last year's price. Mr. Hattersley has already rejected a plea by the Confederation of British Industry to give the Bill a life of only one year, thus pairing it with the next phase of incomes policy, instead of giving it an indefinite life.

Mr. Hattersley will be prepared to give companies the right to interim price rises during an investigation—again relying on a safeguard formula.

Indefinite life and may be placed on a one-year basis. Paperwork for pre-notifying companies will be reduced. There will be a right of appeal for companies involved in investigations.

The Bill will also place a duty on the Government to draw up safeguards to protect companies from being damaged commercially during a price investigation. How this will be done is still the subject of discussion.

Mr. Hattersley originally proposed that price controls should be set at levels below which profit margins should not be squeezed. The CBI wants the safeguards to act as "trip wires" to define the profit performance point below which companies could be sure of not being investigated. It requires the continuation of the levels provided by the present price code as a minimum for the new safeguards, but so far Mr. Hattersley has favoured a more flexible approach.

Another issue is whether Mr. Hattersley will be prepared to give companies the right to interim price rises during an investigation—again relying on a safeguard formula.

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### Bill tabled to renew price controls policy

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### US charterer rejects £23m Clyde drill ship

By Roger Vetrove  
Energy Correspondent

Ben Ocean Lancer, built on the Clyde for £23m, the most advanced oil exploration ship in the world was rejected last night by her American charterer.

The ship now lies in the Clyde with her crew aboard, ready to sail but with nowhere to go.

The dispute between her owners, the British-registered Ben Odeco Company, and her prospective charterers Chevron Overseas International, is to go to arbitration in London.

A Ben Odeco spokesman said he did not know why the Americans would not accept the ship. It was understood that Chevron was concerned because the ship was delivered three months late. The company had planned to prove her fully before taking her to Greenland for drilling operations.

The ship, built at the Scott Lithgow yard on the Clyde, is designed to drill wells in water depths of 3,000ft while remaining over the site without anchors for three months at a time.

She was expected to be in service by late 1976.

Mr. A. Ross Belch, Scott Lithgow's managing director, last night blamed the holiday on design changes during construction.

Scott Lithgow is the only British shipyard which has developed the technology to build this type of ship.

It is building a similar one for a United States-Norwegian consortium and is looking for more orders. The achievement is regarded as giving a great boost to British shipbuilding.

A statement from Ben Odeco said simply that the Ben Ocean Lancer had been accepted from the builder and she had been tendered to Chevron.

It was also understood that a dispute has arisen which has been referred to arbitration in London.

A spokesman for the company explained: "We have a contract with Chevron for them to charter the ship to go off drilling. We have completed our part of the contract by presenting the ship, but they have not accepted the ship."

He said that by arbitration his company meant some type of legal action.

By Roger Vetrove  
Energy Correspondent

Ashland Oil, a Kentucky-based oil company, is expanding its interest in the North Sea by paying \$78.8m (£46m) for a 54.3 per cent stake in the Thistle oilfield, north-east of the Shetlands.

It will be acquiring the stake from another American company, Santa Fe International, which holds a 21.7 per cent interest in the field, which is due to begin producing oil towards the end of next year.

Ashland said yesterday that the deal was subject to approval by Mr. Benn, Secretary of State for Energy, and clearances by other government agencies.

Mr. Orrin E. Atkins, chairman and chief executive of Ashland, said Ashland would reimburse Santa Fe for one quarter of its development costs from yesterday until the transaction was completed.

The field is expected to produce a maximum of 220,000 barrels of oil a day through direct loading into tankers initially. Once the Thistle pipeline system into Britain is complete, tanker operations will be discontinued.

The deal is one of a number of changes in ownership that have taken place in the Thistle group. Last year the British National Oil Corporation paid \$78m for 65 per cent of the Thistle oilfield.

The field and for a 95 per cent interest in Burnish Oil Development, the operating company.

Japan's foreign reserves last month rose \$174m to \$16,597m. This is the highest total since March 1973, when reserves totalled \$18,125m, before falling to \$16,834m in April 1973.

In February, the reserves stood at \$16,833m, \$343m from January when reserves fell by \$124m.

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### Crash kills broker in £2m Milan scandal

By Patricia Clough

A Milan stockbroker died last night in a mysterious crash, a few hours after being declared insolvent with debts of £1.66m.

The Milan Bourse was shaken by the announcement yesterday of liquidation proceedings against Signor Ignazio Federico di Giorgi, 68, the floor agent and commissioner Giuseppe Cappellotti, who were found to be unable to cover accounts totalling £2m.

Signor Cappellotti has disappeared, as have his documents and accounts.

The liquidation has raised once again questions about the efficacy of Consob, the Stock Exchange Control Commission which was set up about three years ago to prevent such cases.

Signor di Giorgi had been accumulating shares mainly in Trecento—a company which owns the Milan newspaper—and runs the bookmaking activities like apparently with the intention of recouping them.

Press reports suggested that the would-be buyer was Alain Delon, the French film star and businessman, but Bourse sources said it was more likely that Signor di Giorgi hoped to sell them to Trecento's existing majority shareholders.

These are tense times for Trecento. Its chairman, Signor Vittorio di Capua, was kidnapped on March 6 and is being held for ransom.

Signor di Giorgi had accumulated more than 10 per cent of the Trecento shares but got into difficulties when the company decided to increase capital, and the price of its shares plummeted on the stock exchange.

The final blow came when the banks backing him withdrew their support.

Other operations by Signor di Giorgi involved Soritalia and Casanovi shares.

Doubts about his activities had been expressed by the stockbrokers' regulatory committee to Consob, but the Control Commission took no action.

The case had aroused further criticism of Consob. It has frequently been charged with excessive prudential, as well as leading both the manpower and the legal "weight" to do its job properly.

Signor Giacomo Stenami, the Treasury Minister, has promised to submit a bill in Parliament by the end of April to reform Consob.

Patricia Clough

Argentina sources have been Banque Occidentale's approach.

The Falklands company, which Charrington bought as part of Mr. Michael Buckley's investment vehicle, Burrell, Perill and London Securities, made a trading profit of £82,000 to March, 1976, when wool prices were low, but £375,000 in better conditions the previous year.

The company, which is involved in sheep trading and supplying the islanders, accounts for about 45 per cent of the island's gross national product.

any Argentine takeover either of the island or the land on which the company is based, the Falklands Islands Company, without the agreement of the islanders.

Answering a question in the Commons earlier this week, Mr. Rowlands, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, said: "No land can be alienated on the Falklands Islands without the permission of the Falklands Islands Government itself; the British Government would not support such a move."

But the Shackleton report on the islands, 7,500 miles from Britain yet with a staunchly pro-British population of 1,900, concluded that economic co-operation with Argentina would provide the best future.

So, although any immediate takeover of the Falklands Islands Company by Argentine interests is not constitutionally possible some deal to share development with Argentine business interests may still be worked out.

It is a fact that Charrington has had an approach through Banque Occidentale, a subsidiary of Sir James Goldsmith's General Occidentale group, is confirmation that

Argentina sources have been Banque Occidentale's approach.

### American economic growth predicted to rise by 4pc

From Our United States Economics Correspondent  
Washington, April 1

The pace of economic growth in the United States is now quickening, according to private and government economists. Real gross national product is widely seen as rising by 4 per cent at an annual rate in the current quarter.

Unemployment figures for March, released by the Department of Labour today, add strength to economic forecasts. The total of people out of work declined to 7.3 per cent on a seasonally adjusted basis last month, from February's 7.5 per cent level.

The Department noted that the high rate in February was largely due to abnormally cold weather. The decline in March showed that the effects of the employment of the bad weather were only temporary.

Mrs Juanita Kreps, Secretary of Commerce, told a business conference that the bad weather probably boosted the first quarter's inflation rate by about one-half of 1 per cent point, while it probably cut the real

gdp rate by around 1.5 per cent on an annual basis.

Current estimates, she said, suggest 7.6 per cent growth this quarter "will be about halfway between the weak 2.6 per cent annual rate of last year's fourth quarter and the roughly 6 per cent rate we hope—and expect—to achieve during the remainder of the year."

Private economists hold very similar views to those now being outlined by the Government's experts. Mr. Alan Murray, a vice-president at Citibank, is also predicting a real annual growth rate this quarter of about 4 per cent, while the latest Wharton School economic forecast sees an advance of 3.76 per cent.



## PERSONAL INVESTMENT AND FINANCE

## Round-up

## New funds for the US and Japan

Surinvest, the unit trust and investment management group, is one of the United Kingdom pioneers of index-linked funds—a concept that has become increasingly fashionable in the United States.

Last year it launched its American Index unit trust and was manager to Oceanic's United Kingdom Index Fund. This week it unveiled the Japanese Index Trust, which will invest in 34 major Japanese companies selected by size and sector representation to match as nearly as possible the performance of the Japanese stock market.

The main plank in Surinvest's argument for index linking is that the conventional management approach is that of the unit trusts specialising in the Far East or Japan managed to beat the Tokyo index after allowing for the fall in sterling and the rise in the investment currency premium over the past five years. So the figures demonstrate not so much the virtues of index linking as the importance of the method used to fund overseas investment.

Over the five-year period three major funds rose by an average of 102 per cent as against a rise of 92 per cent in the Tokyo index. But adding in currency gains and the premium brings the latter figure to an equivalent 253 per cent for a United Kingdom resident. Surinvest has therefore opted to invest with yen bought through the investment currency market rather than by overseas borrowings.

Obviously a fund that adopted this approach over the past few years would have substantially outperformed the Japanese market merely on the basis of the weakness of sterling. Surinvest is making the view that sterling is unlikely to raise any sustained recovery. If it did, there would be a disadvantage in investing through the premium.

Investors should be aware, that the currency aspect might well overshadow (for better or for worse) the index linking investment policy. Minimum investment in Surinvest's Japanese Index Trust is £500.

## Unit trusts

## M &amp; G chief takes the chair

It must seem ironic to many in the City that the chairmanship of the Unit Trust Association, whose members control, at the last count around £2,700m of investors' funds, should have devolved upon M & G's Edgar Palamoutain.

For M & G, founder of the United Kingdom unit trust movement back in the 1930s, has often preferred to paddle his own canoe in matters where the rest of the industry were inclined to present a common front through the UTA. M & G did not even join the association until five years ago.

More recently, in 1975, David Hopkinson, one of the more hawkish representatives of the industry's investment protection committee (IPC) resigned his position as chairman because of the frustrations of attempting to stimulate concerted City action over the Distillers Company.

M & G still tends to steer its own course. A few weeks ago, when representatives from the unit trusts met Sir Hugh Fraser, then chairman and main shareholder in Suits, M & G arranged its own private consultation.

But Mr Palamoutain, who this week settles into a two-year tenure as chairman of the UTA, describes M & G's relationship with the rest of the industry these days as "very happy, very united".

A spy 58-year-old much given to pacing the floor when explaining a point, Mr Palamoutain first joined M & G 19 years ago, rising to managing director and deputy chairman. He is also chairman of the executive of the Wider Share Ownership Council, a platform that gives him ample scope to expound his highly political views on the economic and investment scene.

As chairman of the Unit Trust Association his top priority, as was his predecessor's, is the restructuring of the industry's fees. Although negotiations with the Department of Trade appear to have dragged on for ages now, Mr Palamoutain feels there is a particular urgency that was not so apparent in previous years.

Obviously a fund that adopted this approach over the past few years would have substantially outperformed the Japanese market merely on the basis of the weakness of sterling. Surinvest is making the view that sterling is unlikely to raise any sustained recovery. If it did, there would be a disadvantage in investing through the premium.

Investors should be aware, that the currency aspect might well overshadow (for better or for worse) the index linking investment policy. Minimum investment in Surinvest's Japanese Index Trust is £500.

Chiefly, the new unit trust group launched last September is equally concerned about the risks of financing overseas investment by borrowings. It is splitting the portfolio for its new American Trust in roughly equal parts between premium and low investment. If it did, there would be a disadvantage in investing through the premium.

Like many managers at present, Chiefly's Peter Potts is optimistic about a sustained upturn in the United States economy this year. Chiefly's American Trust will restrict its portfolio to over 40 shares, with the largest slice, 17.8 per cent, to be invested in energy and natural resource stocks. The minimum holding is £250.

GT Unit Managers have launched the Four Yards Fund mainly for clients of Manchester stockbrokers Charlton Seal Dismick & Co, who are acting as its principal advisers.

The new fund is designed to provide growing income and protection of capital. Investment policy is flexible. The portfolio is split between United Kingdom and overseas equities, plus cash, the aim being to provide a diversified investment on traditional unit trust lines.

What's more, by that time it's quite possible that the floating rate bond, on which the



Mr Edgar Palamoutain: "Institutional involvement with companies is an unresolved and never to be resolved conflict."

small, but embarrassing casualties among the fund management companies, although the links that many groups have with merchant banks has, he feels, camouflaged the difficulties.

Management companies, he believes, should be viable enterprises in their own right, and this he claims is well high impossible on the current scale of charges.

He is anxious that the new fee structure should enable groups to be profitable without their existing amount of funds, rather than relying, as he believes many are now doing, on the loading in initial charges on new investment to save them from going into the red on their operations.

The UTA is proposing a new structure consisting of an initial premium of 5 per cent plus an annual charge of 1 per cent

as against the current 13 per cent over 20 years. In addition Mr Palamoutain is determined to pursue the matter of charging auditors and trustee fees to unitholders rather than to the management company. He argues that, as a point of principle, the unitholders should pay for these services which are, after all, for their own protection.

Most of the unit trust industry will be happy with this, but Mr Palamoutain's thinking on some broader issues appears curiously at variance with the view of others prominent in the movement.

Earlier this week the outgoing UTA chairman Tim Simon, chairman of Target declared: "We also believe that the unit trust industry, in common with other institutions, should recognise its responsibility of caring for the interests of its investors

in more ways than can be satisfied by the requirements of good fund management alone."

Mr Simon went on to say that the association should ensure that "the British investors' interests on a broad range of issues should not go unheard."

Mr Palamoutain is significantly less enthusiastic about the capacity of the unit trust industry to stimulate sluggish or stubborn companies. He believes that the first duty of managers is to the funds entrusted to them. If they do not like the way a company is behaving they should, in most circumstances, sell the shares.

Only if the company is so small and the shareholding is so significant should there be any question of the institutions remaining as holders and influencing management.

He categorically does not believe that the unit trust

movement can hold itself out as the saviour of the small investor, as many commentators would have it do. The whole problem of institutional involvement with companies, he declares, is an "unresolved and never to be resolved conflict".

Ultimately the institutions have neither the time nor the capacity to manage, therefore they should think very carefully about appointing independent managers.

He is conscious of the fact that recent City upheavals have not shown institutional initiative in a particularly potent light. Sir Hugh Fraser, for instance, having been confronted by the IPC's delivered not so much of a slap in the face, more of a knockout punch by them selling out to Lloyds.

This may be all rather different from the knight in shining armour approach favoured by many in the unit trust industry, but it does have the virtue of being realistic. He is aware that what suits the institutions may not necessarily suit the private shareholder at all.

He cites the case of Lloyds as a prime example of a company whose management is regarded with suspicion by most City institutions. Yet it is a fact, he declares that if the management were altered the company would probably do less well for its shareholders.

Although unwilling for the UTA to shoulder any moral commitment to the investing public at large Mr Palamoutain is obviously concerned for the investment protection committee to do what limited amount it can to reconcile the often conflicting demands of members and present a united front on some issues.

He is very much in favour of strengthening the concept of non-executive directors as watchdogs for all shareholders, although he admits that events in some of the City's more notorious fiefdoms have exposed its shortcomings.

But although institutional shareholders have recently found themselves in unwilling receipt of a number of well aimed custard tarts, Mr Palamoutain maintains, unfortunately, that the investment protection committee will continue to "do more good than harm".

Margaret Drummond

## Budget: taxation

## SEPARATE TAXATION OF WIFE'S EARNINGS—1977/78

	Incomes aggregated	Separate taxation Husband	Wife
Earnings: Husband	7,000	7,000	2
Wife	3,000		3,000
	10,000		
Less Married allowance WEIA*	1,225	805	805
Single PA			805
Taxable income	7,975	6,195	2,195
Tax payable:			
at basic rate 33% (6,000)	1,980	(6,000)	1,980
at 40% (1,000)	400	(195)	78
at 45% (975)	438		
	2,818	2,058	724
Joint total		2,782	

Tax saving under separate taxation £34.  
\* Wife's earned income allowance.

## Strategy changes may be needed

Assuming that the Chancellor of the Exchequer gets his satisfactory pay deal the basic rate of tax will be reduced from 35 per cent to 33 per cent in 1977-78. Although the thresholds of the rate bands will increase, the higher rates themselves will remain unchanged, so once a person's taxable income exceeds £6,000 the first jump in the tax rate will be from 33 per cent to 40 per cent.

This difference of 7 per cent in the lower rates is not the largest in the short history of our unified system of personal taxation. When it first came into being in 1973-74 the basic rate was 30 per cent and the next rate jumped 10 per cent to 40 per cent.

Nevertheless a seven points difference might give some taxpayers, hovering between 33 per cent and 40 per cent, reason to pause and consider whether some action should be taken to ensure that they keep themselves within the confines of the basic rate.

It is taxable income that counts, which means income from all sources, less personal allowances and deductible outgoings, such as interest paid on one's house mortgage, alimony and maintenance payments made under a legally binding agreement and pension contributions. So a person's income can be considerably higher than £6,000—by the total of the personal allowances and outgoings to be precise—and still be kept within the basic rate band.

Just in case anyone thinks that life insurance premiums reduce taxable income, a reminder that since the change-over to the unified system, life insurance premiums have not been regarded as a personal allowance; any increase in them will not therefore reduce taxable income. The relief is given in terms of tax, one-half of the basic rate times the premiums, so with a reduction in the basic rate to 33 per cent the relief will be 33 per cent instead of the present 17 per cent.

Just how far one is prepared to go to keep out of the 40 per cent slice is a subjective judgment based very much on one's cash requirements. Clearly there is no point in buying a bigger and better house to get extra tax relief on interest (the £25,000 loan limit permitting) if it means not being able to meet normal living expenses.

The increase in the single person's allowance (from £735 to £805) and the married allowance (from £1,085 to £1,225) combined with the lifting of the threshold in the higher rate bands, has an interesting result so far as separate taxation is concerned.

Married couples who in the past have claimed for the separate taxation of wife's earnings may find that for 1977/78 it is no longer advantageous to continue to do so. The levels of income at which it will be beneficial for 1977/78 will depend

on the deductions for personal allowances and outgoings, and the respective earnings of the spouses.

The illustration in the table gives a guideline. Assuming that that total income consists of £7,000 earned by the husband and £3,000 earned by the wife, and that they have no deductions other than the basic personal allowances, there is a tax saving from assessment of only £34. If there was a mortgage, for example, it would be but not to claim. However, there is plenty of time to think about it, the deadline for withdrawal of a claim being April 5, 1979.

Turning to the investment income surcharge, the thresholds have been increased resulting in a small tax saving. For those in a small tax saving, the starting point is raised from £1,000 to £1,500. The first £500 in excess of £1,500 is taxed at 10 per cent and the excess over £2,000 is taxed at 15 per cent. The maximum saving is £50.

Over the 65s have a higher starting point, which has been increased from £2,000 to £2,500. The first £500 in excess of £2,500 is taxed at 10 per cent and the excess over £2,500 at 15 per cent, the maximum tax saving being £75.

The amount of tax-free interest on ordinary deposits with the National Savings and Trustee Savings Bank is increased from £40 to £50. This is a useful area of investment for children, as well as adults, as the exempt amount does not count as taxable income and is not therefore taken into account in calculating the child income limit.

There will be considerable variations in PAYE deductions over the next few months. The reduction in child allowances for 1977/78, foreshadowed before Christmas, take effect from the first pay day after April 6.

Fathers who pay tax at the basic rate and whose child or children are entitled to child benefit will find that their pay packet is reduced by their pay week's reduction of the number of children. The number of children at the higher rates will suffer a larger reduction; 80p a week for those in the 40 per cent rate band; 90p a week for those in the 50 per cent rate band and so on upwards.

On the other hand mothers can claim £1 a week tax-free benefit for their first child from April 4. As a result the majority of families will be a little better off under this new system, but this will not be so where father's tax rate is over 50 per cent.

For the first pay day after May 17 taxpayers will receive the benefit of the higher personal allowances. A married man paying at the basic rate will receive an extra 94p a week in his pay packet and a single person or a married working woman will have an extra 47p. In general those paying tax at the higher rates will also get the benefit of the increased thresholds in the first pay day after May 17, although those with more than one employment may have to wait until after May 31.

In view of the conditional nature of the new rates has yet been announced for the implementation in the tax tables of the lower basic rate.

Vera Di Palma

## Fixed interest investment

## Courses of action as rates come down

At this stage in the credit cycle—Thursday's one point cut in minimum lending rate to 5 1/2 per cent—has brought it to within half a point of its 1976 low—I would under normal circumstances be advocating masterly inactivity. But not this time. Today, even though I think that the bull market in gilts has a little further to run, I'm advising my clients to take a basic rate to put their money into the building society.

Yes, I know that the building societies will be putting their rates down in the near future. After the banks cut their base rates by a point and their rate to seven-day deposits by 1 1/2 points last week this is inevitable. But in a few weeks' time I think it may be possible to judge the course of future rates much better.

If, as I suspect, they are put down again, you'll have a lot more freedom of action than a term investment would have given you. You might have missed some capital gain on investment in a gilt, but you'll have eliminated the possibility of a capital loss, too; and the return you're getting on your investment in the meantime is much higher.

What's more, by that time it's quite possible that the floating rate bond, on which the

Government is now taking "certain preparatory steps" to issuing, will be on the market. The 10 per cent would have been the interest on them goes up when—or shortly after—market interest rates go up, and they therefore more or less hold their capital value. They're a much better way of riding out a rise in rates than anything on offer today.

If your income is so low that you are not paying any tax at all (in which case building society investment is not for you) then you need the highest return that you can get, even if it means sacrificing a little in the way of flexibility. I would say that the answer is a National Savings Bank Investment Account, which will pay you 10 per cent on as little as a pound.

It is true that you could have got rather more—10 per cent—on an investment lost week in local authority yearling bonds; but I reckon that the coupon will be lower on the next issue on Tuesday.

It is also true that you could have got 10 per cent on a £200 investment with Thetford, but you would have had to rack your money away for a minimum of a year, as against a minimum of a month. And in any case, rates were coming

down so fast on Friday that there is no guarantee that that 10 per cent would have held until Monday.

There are, of course, higher rates available for those who are set on parking their money away for a longer period: West Derbyshire will give you 12 1/2 per cent for a two-year investment of £1,000, and the same amount on a five-year term will earn

you 13 per cent with Birmingham. But I really think that this is the wrong moment for going long.

And finally, what of the high taxpayers? The arguments for capital gains as opposed to income are, of course, as high as ever: the only question is by what strategy to obtain it. I think there is a reasonable likelihood that interest rates

have further to fall, but not much: I would expect them to steady out, at least by the summer. So that leaves room for a little more euphoria in the gilt-edged market. But if you want your capital gains tax free I think it would pay you to postpone your buying till later in the year.

Adrienne Gleeson

## FIXED INTEREST RETURNS AFTER THE RATE FALLS

Institution	Min/max deposit	Term	Gross rate to basic rate taxpayer	How interest paid
Building societies investment accounts	25p/£10,000	On demand	12	Net
Term shares	Variable/£10,000	2-4 years	12.9-14.7	Net
Clearing banks Deposit accounts	£1/£10,000	7 days' notice	5	Gross
Medium-term deposits†	£10,000/£25,000	7 days/1 year	8-8.8 13/16	Gross
Gilt-edged stock				Gross*
Treasury 11 1/2% 1978	£	Negotiable	11.2	Gross*
Treasury 12 1/2% 1983	£	Negotiable	11.2	Gross*
Treasury 13 1/2% 1997	£	Negotiable	12.4	Gross*
Local authorities Yearling bonds	£1,000	1 year	10 1/2	Gross
Mortgages	(see text)			
FF††	£1,000/£25,000	3 years 10 years	11 1/2 12 1/2	Gross
National Savings Nat Savings Bk Investment accts	25p/£10,000	On demand to £30	7.7	First £50 tax-free
Savings Certificates	£1/£	One month's notice	10	Gross
Brit Savings Bonds	£5/£10,000	4 years' maturity	11.09	Gross
		5 years' maturity	8 1/2	Gross 4% tax-free bonus on maturity
Trustee Savings Bank Ordinary	5p/£10,000	On demand to £30	6.15	First £40 tax-free
Special Inv dep'ts	5p/£	7 days' notice	7	Gross
	£100/£	1 year	8 1/2	Gross

†These rates are for illustration only, ask on application; \*Free of tax on residents abroad; †No limit.

## Alliance Building Society tops £1,000 million assets.

At the 113th Annual General Meeting of the Alliance Building Society in Hove on 1st April 1977, Mr. L. Farrer-Brown, Chairman, reported record mortgage lending in 1976 and highlighted the Society's achievement of £1,000 million total assets during the year.

Mr. Farrer-Brown said that the growth rate of 18.2% was among the highest achieved by any building society in 1976 and that the Society's general reserve had increased to £33 million, representing 3.31% of total assets compared with 3.05% in the previous year.

The number of shareholders and depositors had increased by over 60,000 and they had made gross investments which averaged £11 million for each working day of the year.

Record lending had been achieved by the Society both as regards the number—25,078—and the total amount—£224 million—of mortgage advances. This reflected a deliberate policy to maintain lending at as high a level as possible and to this end net liquidity was reduced from 18.4% to 16.4% after allowing for sums held for payments due in January 1977.

In the course of the year two changes were made in the investment and mortgage interest rates and what happened as a result illustrated the necessity for building societies to maintain over the

whole range of investments their competitiveness for funds. If they are to play their part in sustaining the present scale of home-ownership, let alone help, as they wish, to extend home-ownership.

During the last three months of the year when the Bank of England Minimum Lending Rate was raised to 15%, the Society extended the range of its High Income Term Shares in order to attract the required amount of funds to meet the demand for mortgages.

A recent survey sponsored by the National Economic Development Office shows that three-quarters of those under the age of 45 named the ownership of their house as their ideal choice and a large proportion of them expected to realise that hope within ten years. For this to happen an increasing flow of funds into building societies will be essential. The Alliance seeks the resources and freedom to advance home-ownership to the full and it always gives mortgage priority to its investors.



For copies of the Report & Accounts and details of the Society's savings & investment schemes, please contact any Alliance Branch or Agent, or Head Office, Alliance House, Hove Park, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 7AZ (telephone Brighton 776454).

## Budget: self-employed pensions, annuities

## No improvement for the less well-off • Loophole closed

It is the "small print" which matters—not only in insurance policies but also in Budget speeches. Many hard pressed self-employed may have thought that they will be able to put aside more on a tax free basis, towards a personal pension. The catch is that the improvement applies only to those earning more than £15,000 a year after various deductions.

It is proposed to increase the upper limits on contributions for the self-employed and those in non-pensionable employment from £2,250 to £3,000 (for anyone born in 1916 or later). But the other limit of 15 per cent of net relevant earnings is not being altered. So, there is no change for those earning less than £15,000.

The monetary limits (but not the percentage limits) also go up for those born in 1915 or earlier—gradually rising to

a new maximum of £4,000 (or 20 per cent) of net relevant earnings for anyone born in 1907 or earlier.

Once again, the Chancellor has failed to acknowledge that it is not only those born before 1916 who should be allowed to contribute more than 15 per cent. In today's conditions, 15 per cent of earnings is unlikely to produce a particularly good pension at retirement; the contribution needs to be larger than that.

Any company which has a good pension scheme for employees will confirm that, for reasonable benefits, the contribution generally is a higher percentage of salary roll. Understandably, the self-employed feel this is discrimination against them.

For those who are eligible to pay higher contributions, this is one of the finest forms of saving, in view of the tax advantages. Full relief of tax

can be claimed on one's contributions—so that effectively they are paid out of a gross basis from one's top slice of income.

The insurance company's pension fund operates on a gross basis and when one chooses to take the pension at any time between the ages of 60 and 75, part of the pension can be exchanged for a tax free cash sum, with the remaining pension counting as earned income for tax purposes.

As before, up to a third of the maximum contribution can be devoted to a life assurance contract providing cover against premature death. While the gross premium for this is slightly lower than the normal premium (because the business is written in the pension fund and full relief of tax can be claimed on it) every effort should be made to pay the maximum towards a pension, with life cover being bought

separately and subject to the usual relief of half the basic rate of tax.

There are two ways in which a Chancellor can plug a tax loophole in the life assurance and annuity field. The most common is to apply the new rules to policies arranged after the Budget, leaving existing contracts unaffected—as we have seen in the past when the maturity value of single premium life policies became liable to what was then surtax, and the cash option from annuity-based growth bonds became liable to basic rate tax as well.

In blatant cases of tax avoidance, the use may come down straight away—as happened on Tuesday with "reverse" annuities. Here, a company effectively has bought an annuity from the individual—paying

cash (probably in instalments), which is likely to be tax free. In return, regular payments have been made by the individual net of basic rate tax, and relief has been claimed for the higher rates of tax. Effectively, therefore, the idea has been to secure tax free sums in return for gross income which, otherwise, would have been highly taxed.

Now, an individual's payments will no longer qualify for tax relief, and those who have indulged in this practice will have to unscramble the arrangements as best they can.

The moral is that those who embark on schemes designed solely for tax avoidance on a long-term basis, may find that, however counsel may say, the Chancellor can step in and alter the rules at any stage of the game.

John Drummond



EDITED BY MARGARET STONE

FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

مكتبة الأمل

Investor's week

## Muted market response to Mr Healey

Though the stock market initially reacted favourably to the Chancellor's package the response was muted, and investors were not prepared to chase prices much higher.

After a cautious start on Monday both equities and gilt sprang to life late on Tuesday and throughout the whole of the following session. The institutions were back in the market in force for the first time since the end of the period bringing double-figure rises to many of the "blue chip" equities and unprecedented rises of up to £3 for many gilts.

The particular appeal of the Chancellor's proposals was the linking of personal taxation cuts to another round of incomes raising. This was seen as going some way to resolving the market's concern over the reaction of the trade unions to continued pay restraint. But the point remains a background worry and by the end of the week was putting a positive drag on sentiment.

So the Budget euphoria was short lived and on Thursday the institutions withdrew, profits were taken and all of the Budget gains were wiped out. At night's close of 412.5 the FT Index was 5.6 lower over the week. Market thinking then turned to interest rates and here the signs were rather less encouraging, for the short-term rate at least.

A round of base rate cuts from the clearing banks was

quickly followed by a full point reduction in the minimum lending rate. But the move was largely expected and the Bank of England's action was seen as a clear indication that it did not want interest rates to fall further for the time being.

The response from equities was muted, many dealers feeling that with the interest rate spur removed and the Budget already discounted the market is badly in need of fresh incentive.

Like equities, gilt-edged stocks were little stirred by the MLC move and immediate gains were soon lost. But they

were helped late on Thursday by the announcement of a new partly-paid share "tap" of £800m. The terms are judged to be favourable and heavy applications are expected when the application lists open on Wednesday.

Bid and speculative shares were quieter than in recent weeks but it looks as if there is an end in sight of the Herriot Morris takeover saga. After turning down three offers from Babcock & Wilcox, the Loughborough crane-maker has agreed to terms worth £8m from Hawker Siddeley and the shares rose 25p to 252p.

Scientific equipment maker A. Gallenkamp soared 82p to 272p after news of takeover by a yet unidentified company.

The shares have been bought speculatively for a couple of weeks now and, as the company is a substantial overseas earner, were initially firm on dividend hopes. Next group FMC, down 12p to 101p, turned down an approach from fellow FTSE 100 member Burtchell & Co. A substantial FMC shareholder, has also rejected the offer.

Results from well-known names like Tube Investments 392p, Lucas 245p, Cadbury Schweppes 447p and B&W 395p, were all received favourably. But this was not the case with London Brick at 30p after profits at the lower end of the range of estimates. International group Dalry, down 4p to 235p, announced a £12m rights issue, while Spirax-Sarco, up 10p to 199p, was another raising cash.

In spite of a clutch of mainly favourable results the insurance sector remained depressed by the earlier air disaster which had shaken the industry up to £200m. Underwriting results from the Prudential were disappointing and the shares lost 6p to 122p. But Legal & General impressed, although the shares lost 4p to 122p.

David Mott

## MAIN RISES AND FALLS OF THE WEEK

RISERS			
Year's high	Year's low	Company	Movement
370p	197p	APV	30p to 362p
272p	105p	Gallenkamp	82p to 272p
173p	100p	Marshall's Univ	18p to 173p
252p	64p	H. Morris	26p to 252p
194p	92p	Ocean Wilsons	12p to 182p
FALLS			
276p	175p	EMI	19p to 201p
115p	30p	FMC	12p to 101p
85p	13p	R. Kitchen	5p to 20p
615p	17p	Wm Press	74p to 51p
352p	20p	Royal Insurance	21p to 310p

Pensions

## Reviewing post-retirement benefit

If you are a member of an occupational pension scheme which allows increases on pensions after they start to be paid, you may well find that the arrangements are revised next year.

In April 1978 the new earnings related state pension scheme starts. Before then—long before then—decisions will have to be taken about contracting out. The option open to "good" occupational pension schemes is to take over the responsibility for the part of the new pension in excess of the flat-rate basic pension, in exchange for a reduction in the national insurance contributions payable by both employer and scheme members.

One feature of the new state scheme is the in-built protection against inflation. The earnings on which the pension is calculated will be adjusted by reference to national average earnings. The pension, once it becomes payable, will similarly be revised annually in line with a price or earnings index.

If a scheme is contracted out, it will have to match the protection up to retirement. There will be no "guaranteed minimum pension" on a similar basis to the state scheme earnings related element, and the basic formula for calculating

pensions will also have to be based on either "final" pay or on average pay throughout membership with the same sort of adjustment for changes in earnings levels as is included in the state scheme.

After retirement, however, there will be no requirement to review the pension. In respect of the guaranteed minimum pension the national insurance fund will accept responsibility for increases. This will be achieved by paying, as part of the state pension, the increases which would have been due if the pensioner had never been contracted out.

The result will be that, in an occupational scheme which has provision for pensions to increase and which contracts out, members will receive double increases on the guaranteed minimum pension part, once from their own scheme and once from the state.

What is done about this will depend on circumstances. If the scheme has a fixed rate of increase, pensions probably fail to keep pace with inflation, and there is a strong argument for continuing the increases on the whole occupational scheme pension.

If increases have been running at a higher rate, this argument is no longer valid; unless the occupational scheme increases exclude the guaran-

teed minimum pension, the total income from state and occupational scheme combined may well increase at a higher rate than either changes in money values or the earnings generally of those still in employment.

In the case of a scheme with an index-linked pension (or one which in fact achieves that level of increase, without formal indexation) there clearly must be a rate of increase greater than is required to protect the pensioner, or even give him his fair share of any general increase in prosperity of the community as a whole. In this case the occupational scheme, if it contracts out, is almost certain to consider amendments to exclude guaranteed minimum pensions from any increases.

In many schemes the decision about a possible modification of the increase arrangements will be based on other considerations. The rate of contribution to the national insurance scheme by both employers and employees will be lower in cases where the employee is contracted out. The saving will be significantly larger than the expected increase in national insurance contributions in April, although there will be very much larger increases to come over the next 30 years. The saving will also be much

greater than the cost in most of the better schemes of introducing these modifications necessary to meet the contracting out requirements.

In many schemes the net result is likely to be that the employer's total cost, national insurance contributions and his own pension scheme contributions combined, will go down by perhaps 1 per cent to 2 per cent of pay roll, even if the members are allowed to keep the whole of the reduction in their own national insurance contributions—24 per cent saving from contracting out less a small increase in the general level of contributions on the introduction of the new scheme.

Not many employers in this position are likely to feel like defending a reduction from the level of benefits already being provided. The only circumstances which might make this step salable to the members are if some of the other benefits under the scheme are being improved at the same time. This is most likely to be a case where the benefits are a modest—but, of course, such a scheme is less likely to have generous pension increase arrangements and therefore less likely to face the problem in the first place.

Eric Brunet

## Unit trust performance

UNIT TRUSTS: Medium and Income funds (progress this year and the past three years). Unitholder Index: 1790.2; rise from January 1, 1977: +12.5%. Average change offer to bid, net income included, over past 12 months: -0.5%; over 3 years: +29.1%.

MEDIUM			
Unit	Offer	Bid	Change
Franklin & Co. F	18.0	17.8	-0.2
Piccadilly Tech	14.9	14.7	-0.2
Schroder General	11.9	11.7	-0.2
Rowan Securities	10.7	10.5	-0.2
Mercury General	10.1	9.9	-0.2
Windsor Growth F	9.8	9.6	-0.2
Henderson Inc Assets	9.5	9.3	-0.2
Jacobs Seed Leads	9.3	9.1	-0.2
Barclays Invest	9.1	8.9	-0.2
Pedion	8.8	8.6	-0.2
Brown Shipley	8.3	8.1	-0.2
Discretionary F	8.0	7.8	-0.2
Manual Security Plus	7.6	7.4	-0.2
Equity & Law	7.3	7.1	-0.2
Crescent Reserve	6.7	6.5	-0.2
Target Thistle	6.2	6.0	-0.2
Piccadilly Private	5.8	5.6	-0.2
United Trusts	5.5	5.3	-0.2
London Wall Capital	5.7	5.5	-0.2
Friends Provident	5.5	5.3	-0.2
M & G Midland	5.4	5.2	-0.2
Trusts & Co	5.3	5.1	-0.2
M & G Sec General	4.9	4.7	-0.2
Barrington	4.7	4.5	-0.2
Bishopsgate Prog F	4.6	4.4	-0.2
Kleinwort Benson	4.5	4.3	-0.2
British Life Balanced	4.4	4.2	-0.2
London Growth F	4.3	4.1	-0.2
Wickmore	4.2	4.0	-0.2
Abbey General	4.0	3.8	-0.2
Nelson	4.0	3.8	-0.2
Norwich Union	3.9	3.7	-0.2
Allied First	3.8	3.6	-0.2
Guardian	3.7	3.5	-0.2
Lloyds Life Accum F	3.6	3.4	-0.2
NPI Growth Accum F	3.5	3.3	-0.2
Merlin	3.4	3.2	-0.2
Archway Fund M	3.3	3.1	-0.2
Allied Electrical & Ind	3.3	3.1	-0.2
Tyndall Capital	3.3	3.1	-0.2
London Capital	3.2	3.0	-0.2
TSB Scottish	3.1	2.9	-0.2
Family Fund	3.0	2.8	-0.2
Arbuthnot Giants	2.9	2.7	-0.2
Unit	2.8	2.6	-0.2
Hill Samuel British	2.7	2.5	-0.2
Buckingham	2.6	2.4	-0.2
Centile General	2.4	2.2	-0.2
Anderson Unit Trust	2.2	2.0	-0.2
British Life	1.9	1.7	-0.2
M & P General	1.9	1.7	-0.2
S & P Sconbars	1.5	1.3	-0.2
Prudential	1.5	1.3	-0.2
Pearl Unit Trust	1.2	1.0	-0.2
Britannia Domestic	1.2	1.0	-0.2
Britannia Growth	1.2	1.0	-0.2
Oceanic Growth	1.1	0.9	-0.2
Britannia Unit Energy	1.1	0.9	-0.2
Hill Samuel Capital	0.8	0.6	-0.2
G & A	0.6	0.4	-0.2
Union General	0.4	0.2	-0.2
Allied Ham British	0.1	0.0	-0.1
S & P UK Equity	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hambro Fund	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hill Samuel Security	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lloyds Bank Fourth	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lloyds Bank First	0.0	0.0	0.0
Target Professional	-0.3	-0.5	-0.2
Allied Growth & Inc	-0.4	-0.6	-0.2
Allied Capital	-0.7	-0.9	-0.2
Alben Trust	-0.7	-0.9	-0.2
Key Private	-1.0	-1.2	-0.2
Legal & General	-1.0	-1.2	-0.2
Colnace	-1.7	-1.9	-0.2
Quadrant F	-1.9	-2.1	-0.2
Mutual "Blue Chip"	-2.1	-2.3	-0.2
Cabot F	-2.3	-2.5	-0.2
Mutual	-2.3	-2.5	-0.2
Garmore British	-2.5	-2.7	-0.2
S & P Ebor General	-2.5	-2.7	-0.2
Friar House M	-2.7	-2.9	-0.2
Lloyds Bank Second	-3.0	-3.2	-0.2
Cleu Fund	-3.0	-3.2	-0.2
Unicorn "500"	-3.1	-3.3	-0.2

A: Change since March 25, 1976, offer to bid, income reinvested.  
B: Change since April 1, 1974, offer to bid, income reinvested. Both taken to March 31, 1977.  
M: Trust valued monthly.  
Statistics supplied by Money Management and Unitholder, 30 Finsbury Square, London, EC2.

Stock markets

## Hangover on politics and interest rates

The lack of an immediate incentive and some political uncertainty brought a miserable end to an eventful week for both equities and gilts.

With buyers adopting an extremely cautious and selective approach, light profit-taking was enough to lower the FT Index 6.9, for a close of 412.5. This was its lowest point of the day and over the week the loss was 5.6.

Dealers said that with interest rates unlikely to fall again for some time and the Budget fully discounted, there was little for investors to go for and most shares drifted through lack of interest. A background concern was the Government's fragile vote, made worse by the Secretary of Education's resignation and of particular significance, because of Monday's Budget vote.

Expect Royce-Parsons to move sharply up, as it is strongly expected that the Government will allow the early ordering of Stage Two of the coal-fired power station at Drax in Yorkshire. Soon we should hear that profits jumped from £25.2m to £28.1m, making a rise of 11p over the week. But Hawker Siddeley added 4p to 45p on the news of a Wm Reed share and F. Miller gained 2p to 47p after profits.

The clearing banks, all ended 5p down with Lloyds at 210p, National West 235p, Midland 280p and Barclays 260p. After rising on interest-rate hopes, properties were hit by profit-taking with Bernard Sunley off 7p to 154p and Land Securities 4p to 171p. The firm exception was Alnath London which put on 5p, for a finish of 149p.

Equity turnover on March 31 was £68.9m, 19.984 bargains. Active stocks yesterday, according to Exchange Telegraph, were ICI, BAT, Dd, GEC, Barclays, Beecham, BP, Distillers, Shell, Brown, Midland, BAT, ord, Town & City, National Westminster, Imperial, GKN, Gallenkamp, Telecel, Herberg, Morris, Hunting, Associated, Crosby House and Syltone.

unfavourably with the terms of the new "tap". In such cases, falls were up to £1. But the short end saw a little late buying and many stocks were just a shade firmer in "late, late" dealings.

Among the "blue chips", the heaviest losers were ICI 9p to 354p, Unilever 8p to 460p and Glaxo, whose interim figures are due on Monday, 9p to 483p. Market estimates of the last nine months' profits range between £40m and £43m.

The big engineers also lost ground with Tubes Investments falling a further 9p to 202p after figures and Metal Box lower by 4p to 286p. AEFV was another to fall after gaining ground on earlier figures and this time the decline was 8p to 302p.

From the list of bid and speculative stocks, Herbert Morris, whose agreed bid from Hawker Siddeley was forecast in this column, gained a further 5p to 225p, making a rise of 25p over the week. But Hawker receded 6p to 516p.

After news of an approach, Gallenkamp gained another 2p to 272p, but Pilkington, talked of as a possible acquirer, lost ground heavily to close 15p off at 320p. Others speculatively wanted were James Warren up 5p to 74p, Crosby House, an active stock and 9p better at 123p on bid hopes and Hunting Associated where the rise was 19p to 126p.

But profit-taking knocked 7p from L. Gardner at 203p, while for the same reason Telecelit was a penny lower at 91p. The Chancellor's threat to raise beer prices if the petrol vote is lost on Monday brought a late reaction from breweries with Tollermeche down 5p to 130p, Bass Charrington 3p to 109p, Whitbread "A" 3p to 73p, Allied 2p to 70p and Guinness 3p to 138p.

In the textile sector, Lincroft Kilgus added 4p to 45p on the news of a Wm Reed share and F. Miller gained 2p to 47p after profits.

Press comment helped Syltone to rise 3p to 59p, while lower earnings clipped 2p from Stanley Miller at 10p.

In the insurance sector, Hambro Life rose 2p to 212p.

## Latest dividends

Company	Ord	Year	Pay	Year's	Prev
(and par value)	div	ago	date	total	year
Breadon & Cloud (25p) Fin	4.33	3.8	—	5.83	5.3
Charles Early (10p) Fin	1.45	1.45	1/7	1.77	1.77
Elys (Wimborne) (25p) Fin	1.52	1.52	4/6	2.49	2.25
Gaskell (Barnst) (20p) Fin	3.30	3.07	20/5	5.57	5.07
Charles Hurst (25p) Fin	2.71	2.71	23/6	5.37	5.37
F. Miller (10p) Fin	1.3	1.2	10/6	2.6	2.38
Stanley Miller (10p) Fin	0.63	0.63	24/5	1.15	1.15
Romney Tin (10p) Int	1.5	1.5	6/5	—	5.0
Scottish TV (10p) Fin	1.37	1.3	—	2.11	1.3
Wombwell Foundry (10p) Int	0.33	0.33	27/5	—	1.07

Dividends in this table are shown net of tax on pence per share. Elsewhere in Business News dividends are shown on a gross basis. To establish gross multiply the net dividend by 1.54. \* Adjusted for scrip.

## Mr Simons leaving Denbyware

Denbyware, the oven and tableware manufacturer, announced yesterday that it has been mutually agreed that Mr Simon will leave the company.

Mr Simon, who has been managing director, resign with immediate effect following fundamental policy differences in recent months. Mr Simons owns 27.56 per cent of the Denbyware equity of which a US company, Intercon, has an interest of 21.42 per cent. Intercon is a joint company set up when Denbyware was first floated seven years ago with Sherwood Pottery and the former Rolls-Royce.

Aged 43, Mr Simons was at first primarily responsible for promotion and sales co-ordination until he was appointed deputy chairman in June 1973. He was instrumental in building Denbyware's US sales presence through his presidency of the Cincinnati-based tableware importer, Millard-Norman.

## Miller peak again and scrip too

Since going public in 1968, Glasgow-based F. Miller (Textiles) has done better every year and the latest 12 months were no exception.

In the year to February 13, sales rose by 17.65 per cent to £42.2m, and pre-tax profits were 13.5 per cent to the good at £556,000, despite heavier interest of £265,000, against £204,000. The shares rose yesterday.

Up goes the gross dividend by the maximum from 3.53p to 4p and there is a one-for-one scrip issue as well.

In its interim statement last October, the board reported pressure on margins.

## Breedon keeps downturn at bay

Government cutbacks have not yet robbed Breedon and Clout Hill Lime Works of the knack of keeping profits moving with turnover. They rose from £2.55m to £2.67m in the year to January 31, and pre-tax profits from £673,000 to £719,000, another record. Up goes gross payment from 8.16p to 8.85p.

However, pre-tax profits slipped from £407,000 to £373,000 in the first half, and the Government spent, weather is not always a friend of roadbuilders and limestone quarriers.

## Kalahari diamonds for De Beers

The Botswana Government announced yesterday that a diamond pipe had been discovered under the Kalahari desert by De Beers. Although further evaluation work has to be carried out, the government said that it appears to be a major discovery and that other companies have been given up exploring the area would be well advised to look again.

## Erith quietens down after last trick

Record 1976 sales, profits, and payout, are reported by London-based Erith, the builders' merchant.

Sales rose from £17.25m to £20.7m, pre-tax profits by 14 per cent to £55,000 and earnings share from 8.5p to 9.83p, so the gross dividend goes up from a maximum 6.94p to 7.38p.

The pace, however, may be too hot to last. Sales in the second half of 1976 equalled those of the first six months but the rate of increase slowed down, as did the building industry. So it has continued.

## Outlook is good as Scottish TV returns to its old form

By Tony May

The surge seen at Scottish Television at half time has continued. Last year the group nearly equalled its best-ever pre-tax profit of £1.44m, achieved in 1973.

Equally encouraging, since the start of 1977 advertising revenue has risen strongly and Mr J. Campbell Fraser, chairman, says that the first quarter was 38 per cent up on last year.

On the other hand costs are also rising, mainly on increased production expenditure, but the board is encouraged by the

prospects for the first half of 1977 at least.

Turnover for 1976 rose 33 per cent to £12m with £11.6m being brought in by advertising sales, an increase of 32.6 per cent. Other revenue went up 38 per cent to £383,000.

Pre-tax profits jumped more than 63 per cent to £1.44m after deducting £1.17m against £860,000 for Eschquer Levy.

This independent station serving central Scotland resumed interim dividend payments in October and is now paying a maximum total of 3.25p gross for the year against a single payment of 2p last year. The shares hardened 1p to 34p on

the results, where the yield is 9.5 per cent.

Profit at half-time quadrupled to £635,000, a continuation of the improvement which started in the second half of 1975. Advertising was buoyant and showed a 46.5 per cent rise—better than for the industry as a whole.

Mr Campbell Fraser said that current income was up. He expected even better things this year.

In the second half year, the group pushed its profits up 19 per cent to £771,000 on advertising sales of £16.1m—a rise of 22 per cent. Other income spurred 58 per cent to £277,000.

## Abridged Particulars

Issue of 500,000 Participating Shares of 1p each fully paid at £10 each

## Surinvest Japanese Index Trust Limited

(Incorporated in Jersey under the Companies (Jersey) Laws 1861 to 1968)

Over the five years to 1st January 1977 the Tokyo Stock Exchange Index in terms of £ sterling plus the investment premium rose 253%.

Over this period not one authorised trust has performed nearly as well as the Tokyo Index in sterling plus the premium.

Surinvest Japanese Index Trust Limited (SJIT) is an open-ended investment company incorporated in Jersey, which provides residents of the Scheduled Territories with a simple vehicle for investing through the premium in the Japanese Stock Market, which is the second largest in the world.

Investors in Japan have done far better than investors in Britain or the United States over the past 5, 10, 15, 20, or 25 years.







## Week ends on low note

**§ Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days.**



## Weekend



## Sheila Black

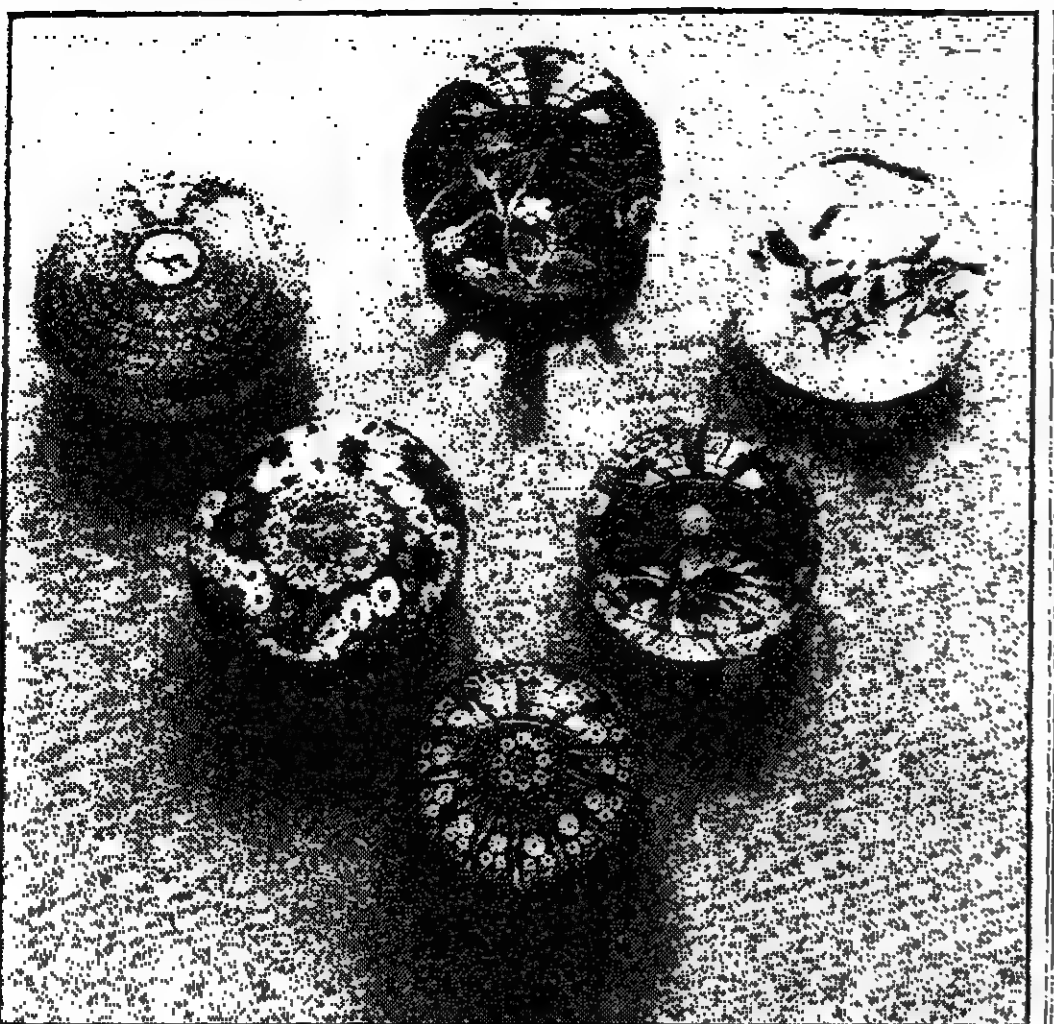
The Merry Paul confectionery shops are a delight, modern versions of the old-fashioned sweetshops full of originalities. A chocolate hound is wrapped in golden paper and has a sad, fished eyes and a shiny plastic little hat box, all golden, holds chocolate, fondant and jelly shapes of rabbits, eggs, a chick and a nest of sugar eggs—there are eight good-sized pieces and the whole is cheap at 65p—I could hardly believe it but that's the

price. Another box of 10 chocolate eggs is £2.25—the chocolate costs so much more than jellies. Stopped jars (great for kitchen, studio or playroom afterwards) look like hard-boiled sweets that look like stones or pebbles and fool everyone who knows them not (85p for 175 grammes). Kendal Mint Cake is like a candied fudge, freshly minty, very good indeed and so high in nutrition that the list of expeditions which carried it covers most of the back of the packets—one slab for 27p or

two in one box for 50p. This would please anyone, whatever the age or sex. Adorable little drawings bags of rough sack, printed like a butcher's bag with Merry Paul's name, are 35p and they make an intriguing wrapping—these are free with some costlier goodies like rum truffles. They would post from the branch at 10 Victoria Arcade, Victoria Street, London, SW1 (01-834 6320). Other branches are at 59 Fleet Street, Sloane Square and in the Leicester Square station booking hall.

It may be too late to tell you about Jennifer King this Easter but her hand-painted eggs are dainty gifts for any time of the year and highly original thank you or greetings. She blows large hen's eggs and paints them with flowers of the cornfield, violets, camomile, red campions, bell flowers with Jacob's Ladder, and hedgerow flowers in silhouette. A summer garden series features blue or yellow butterflies with orange or red flowers, tagetes, rose with lily of the valley, or clusters in a choice of basic colours. Her birds include owls, cockerels, or exotic types. Alternatively what about messages like "I love

you" or "Get well for me" or "Be happy". She charges £1 per egg plus 35p for postage and packing. Eggs for special occasions like Easter sell in presentation boxes and cost £1.95 or £2.45. She makes mobiles and all sorts of exciting possibilities and will send a little descriptive piece of paper for these as well as for things like hand-embroidered garments, wooden or soft toys, leather, enamelled jewelry and that kind of thing. Please send a good-sized stamped, self-addressed envelope if you want more data from Jennifer King, Seafrogs, Smeaton Close, Pelsall, Staffs WS3 4LB (Pelsall 683359).



Glass paperweights are popular collectors' items because they do not need to cost the earth, take up comparatively little space even in small homes, look lovely and make good conversation pieces and are still to be found as beautifully made as ever they were. At Sotheby's recent sale of glass paperweights there were some superb pieces, whether modern, Venetian, Bohemian, floral or formal. At Asprey, there is always a good selection of Baccarat glass paperweights at prices from approximately £75 to £250 or more. This French company's glass and crystal is the finest of its kind still being made and I recommend anyone who visits Paris to go to the showrooms in the rue du Paradis. Tucked away behind narrow shopping streets is the finest, airy, light museum of crystal I have ever seen, and the guides hand out history with the information to that you can see off what the Tapers ate as well as the plainer ice buckets of today, along with a Cinderella made entirely of glass, with chandeliers forming her ball gown.



Clichy Lily of the Valley on rose wine ground, sold at Sotheby's for £8,500 in March 1970

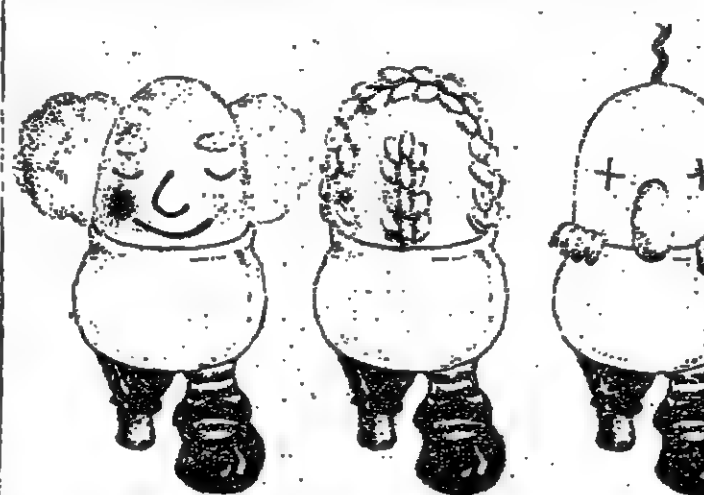
so they make gifts that do not proclaim their price to the recipient yet always look as if they cost more than they actually did. If you want to spend £150 on paperweights, go to The Thomas Coram Foundation at 40 Brunswick Square (north-east corner of this wide-open space by Coram Hill Fields, full of flowers and grass and occasional sunshine and a lovely part of London). Wander round to look at the Art Treasures (open from about 10 am to 4.30 except when there are conferences so it may be worth telephoning 01-278 2424 first) then buy paperweights which encapsulate some part of the paintings or engravings. The paperweights are backgrounds of glass with felt bases. There are two prints of the original Foundling Hospital, demolished from the Fields in 1925, very impressive; a lovely view of the Charter House by Gainsborough, which fits so well into the paperweight because the original was painted as a round; a bust of Handel by Roubiliac and a Hogarth painting of Captain Thomas Coram himself. The charity, founded in 1739, still concerns itself with children, running a special fostering service and trying to find adoptive parents for hard to place children like older or handicapped children. Russell Square is the nearest tube station and there is a good deal of interesting shopping in the Brunswick Square Centre. Spink is holding a kind of "surgery" in the South Western Hotel, Bournemouth,

on April 14 and 15. Six experts, covering Oriental, silver, furniture, picture, coins, notes, china and objects will be there to see anything you might wish to sell, to appraise, to value and to buy if you decide to part with some of your treasures—auction companies have done this kind of thing before but it is a first for Spink and the difference is that they can buy on the spot.

Another first class Spink idea is the Lock, Stock and Barrel scheme, dreamed up by Graham Child, furniture buyer for so many of the 11 years he has been there and a director who innovates. He learnt that people seem to want to sell everything more often than just a few things—the object being to clear some kind of legacy, change directions in life, raise a specific sum, anything. So he now buys the whole contents of a house, clears it entirely even to the last, lost, dirty toothbrush at the back of a cupboard, sweeps out and leaves the place empty. Anything worth restoration gets the Spink treatment and goes into the St James's showroom for two or three months—the table may turn out to be really valuable or the chair could be a Hepplewhite or Chippendale. Spink then keeps 20 per cent of the actual sale price and refunds the rest over and above the spot price paid for the whole household if nobody originally was sure of the value of special pieces. Sellers get immediate cash—none of the long waits entailed by sending to auction and waiting for your specialist categories to come up. The trade being what it is, prices might even be better as dealers are sometimes inclined to pay more for "unseen" goods than for much-viewed saleroom goods.

Solicitors or inheritors love this system which has resulted in some very odd transactions like a Croydon warehouse and old houses that had been shut up for years; one man who unlocked his "legacy" found masses of toys which he offered to local children who tended to spurn such outdated toys but Spink got £200 for them. Obviously they do not buy loads of rubbish but they are not by any means unapproachable or over-selective. Graham Child loves saying "live on a hamper and the power to bring in down fast on a cash price". Find out more from Spink and Son (01-930 7888).

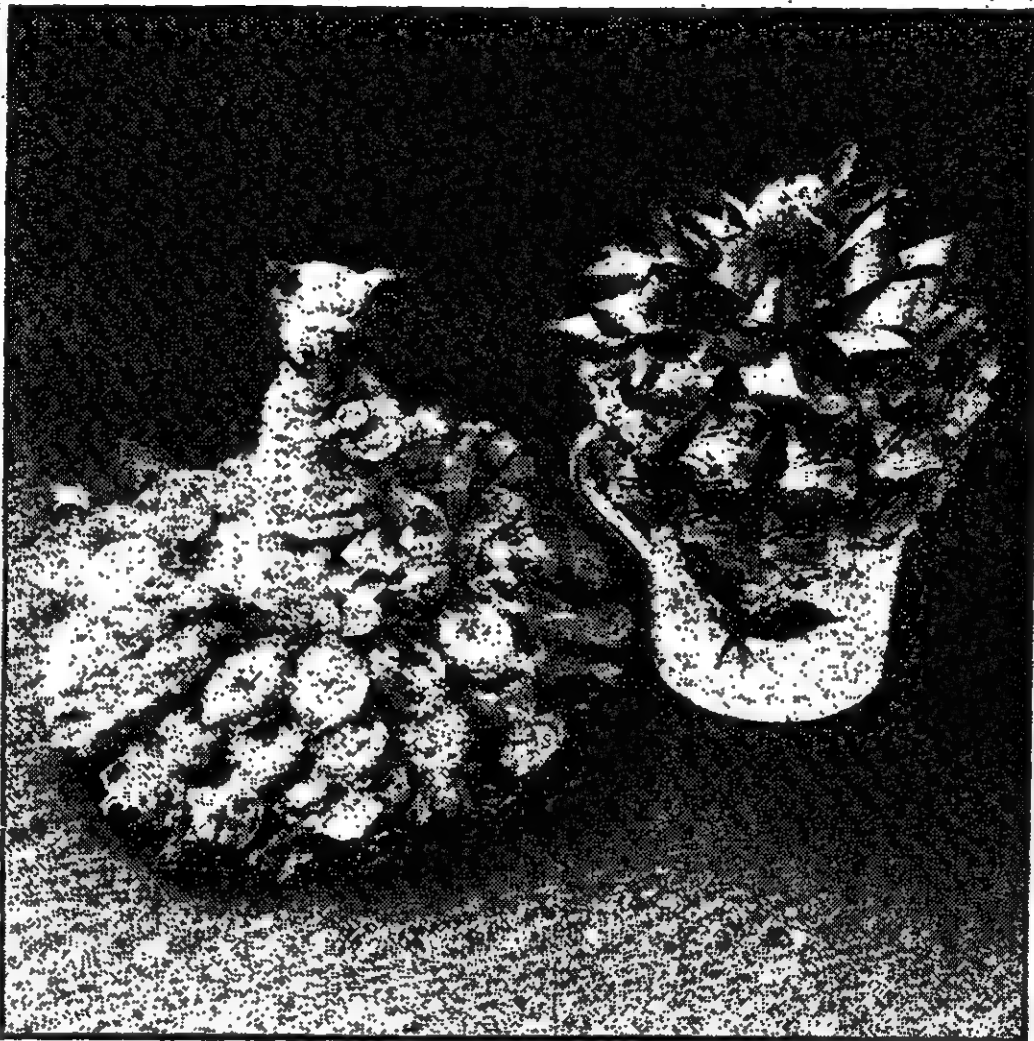
I usually resolve not to fritter money on chocolate eggs for Easter and instead start buying small, useful presents. But all too often end up buying the trumperies as well and giving both. Most of the fun, however, involves that Easter morning breakfast, brunch or whatever you make of this particular festival and even more fun can be had by getting ready a line-up of pretty or amusing eggs in advance. If you think nobody is going to eat all the hard-boiled eggs the family want to dress up, blow a few as you would birds' eggs (only not rare birds, please). Give these rather fragile things to careful people, using the innards for cooking. Here are some simple ideas. The semi-bald man's eyebrows



and hair are of cotton wool. The grains came from farmers' seed shops or similar country shops if you want them golden but packet barley works too. A plasticine nose and a piece of wool make the cross-eyed egg, while felt ears, nose and teeth add character to the button eyes of the central egg. Tint the next egg with icing colours (perfectly safe, this) and tie the lace, which does not slip, then top with narrow ribbon. For the marbled egg, drop some oil paint on a saucer of water and paint. The pirate has a rag turban over his bank-of-wool hair, a wool moustache, paper eye patch and a red bead for his nose (or paint a piece of bridle with nail varnish). Paint all features with Penel or fibre-tipped pens. Eggs dyed

in saffron, cochineal and other food colourings make a pretty sight over the country in a white lustrous basket and trimmed with catkins. Make the eggs a suppersite dish so that everyone can enjoy them all day—suppersite on Monday would be even better. These ideas by designer Joanna Houston should spark off heaps of your own. Our eggs all stand in the Long John Silver eggcups from Christopher Strangeways, 502 Kings Road, London, SW10 (01-

352 9863). They are on sale at a good many shops and stores all over the country in a white lustrous basket and trimmed with catkins. Make the eggs a suppersite dish so that everyone can enjoy them all day—suppersite on Monday would be even better. These ideas by designer Joanna Houston should spark off heaps of your own. Our eggs all stand in the Long John Silver eggcups from Christopher Strangeways, 502 Kings Road, London, SW10 (01-



Soe-bans



Painted egg

Partymad is a shop specializing in party accessories, from room to table decorations, for indoors or out, for any party occasion. Little birds' nests baskets are 45p or 55p and look adorable (postage is, I'm afraid, as much as one of the baskets at 44p). The shop will cater for any and every occasion and is at 67 Gloucester Avenue, London NW1 (01-586 0169).

I cannot think why I went into Kodak wondering what on earth I was going to see after all the publicity given to Kodak's efforts to produce the instant camera. But I had forgotten all that and was childishly enthralled when I started playing with the camera, which beats anything else of its kind. You aim at the subject in that simple, foolproof way associated with the Instamatic range of cameras, it being Kodak's belief that many hundreds of thousands of enthusiastic novices take photographs so they need to be protected from their own mistakes. This camera shows a golden ring in the viewing aperture. Frame the centre of your photograph in that ring—bringing the halo close to the edge of the face, for instance. Check

the environment, then photograph. Focusing is automatic and most results are best on normal although the aperture opens and closes. The flash is automatic and eight bulbs are fixed atop the camera in a special frame. It cannot be fired accidentally but only when a photo is being taken. Then the fun begins. The camera makes a slight whirring noise and slides out a print. Leave it on the table or anywhere while the image slowly appears, fully developing in eight minutes. There is nothing to peel off, no mess, no stickiness, and every picture is delivered dry and satiny. The chemicals locked into the blackened back become harmless and cannot escape—at any rate unless gouged out although there is nothing much to gouge. The nice thing is that the British company had a lot to do with

this marvellous invention and Jubilee year seems an ideal launching time. There are three types. The EK4 has everything the costlier models have but the print has to be wound out by hand which is no great effort—the price is about £49. The EK6 is automatic in giving birth to the print and costs £63. The EK8 has various professional extras like a coupled coincident rangefinder, sophisticated aperture and so on (£105). Film packs with 10 print units cost £4.80. A three-year guarantee goes with each model and it is widely stocked—details from Kodak at Station Road, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 1JU. For nearly 30 years now, the Polaroid company has been experimenting with instant movies and has much hope in a new system under test. Kodak is hardly going to let that one stop them.

## WINE AUSTRALIA

The Australian Wine Centre stocks over 100 wines from 23 leading wine producers in Australia. Prices range from £1.80—£4.00. A selection of six wines (three red, three white) is being offered to readers at £12.45 including carriage to U.K. mainland addresses only. This offer includes—

- d'Arenberg Claret
- Ryecroft Shiraz
- Kaiser Stuhl Claret
- Quelltaler Hock
- Penfold's Light Dry White
- Yalumba Carte d'Or Riesling

OR a 12 bottle selection—2 bottles of each of the above—£23.60. All prices carriage & VAT inclusive.

Please send no money but order to—Australian Wine Centre, 25 Frith Street, London, W1V 5TR. Price list and detailed literature also available.

Offer Closes 30th April, 1977

I will bet that thousands of you have Mahonia in your gardens. You enjoy the early colour and flowering because there is so little else in bloom at that time. You probably like the fact that it is evergreen, glossy and cares little about special soils or locations; that it reproduces easily—perhaps too easily—by suckers and that nothing seems to kill or spoil its spreading erectness.

But I will bet that thousands do not know you can eat those lovely, purple-blue oblong berries of autumn, more often either ignored or added to flower decorations than harvested for the larder. Yet the Mahonia berries were long marketed in America as Oregon Grapes and were very popular for jams, jellies, sauces and preserves. They are still popular, but too widely grown to be attractive as commercial-marketing products in most areas.

I learnt this from a hardback book that has been a fascination for me ever since I discovered it at last year's Chelsea Flower Show. The book is full of tempting excitement for the gardener, indoors or out, and now is the time to buy it and to start experimenting. With light indoor spaces or with greenhouses, you can grow mango, paw paw, guava and a lot of other exotics. Out of doors you can grow a host of unusual fruits like cranberries or blueberries, as well as those we all know so well. My own indoor garden is beginning to live up to the list of the book's contents which reads like a world ramble of orchards, while my daughter's large conservatory now has huge banana plants, healthy pineapple, and a couple of variations of passion fruit which

fruits juicily. My miniature and not-so-miniature oranges and lemons go into sauces, look good all year round in their pots, perfume my room when in blossom and give me enormous fun.

You can buy seeds of many exotics like Cherimoya (custard apple) and the spelling varies from one expert to another when translated into English, guava, papaya, fruit salad bush and so on from Thompson and Morgan, of London Road, Ipswich, Suffolk. Hilliers, of Winchester, sell such things as cranberries, and Thomas Rivers and Son, of Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, sell citrus trees of all kinds although the current season is sold out. You can buy the actual fresh fruits from high class greengrocers or department stores, like Harrods and Fortnum's, then sow the seeds yourself. Not cheaper, even if you buy one fruit which yields many seeds, but fruit seeds often grow better when planted straight from the fruit, in my experience. These exotics start slowly but look splendid when they start fruiting, which may be anything from 18 months to four years, according to type. However, not all fruits can be grown from seed so do buy the book first, then plot your unusual orchards. It is called *Growing Unusual Fruit*, by Alan P. Simmons, a descendant of Kentish fruit growers who has long wanted to extend the frontiers of fruit growing in Britain. The publisher is David and Charles, of Newton Abbot, Devon, and the cheap edition price is £2.75 (was once £4.50). I have found that every friend who sees it wants one. Bookshops or direct—add 30p postage.

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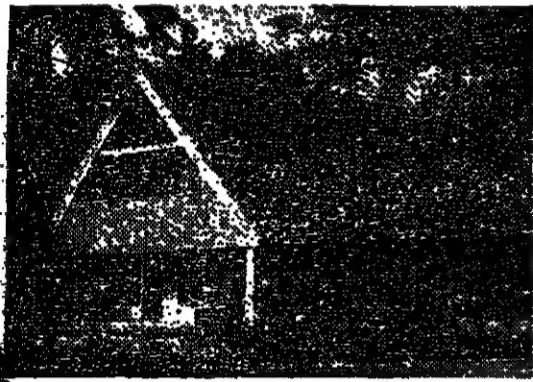
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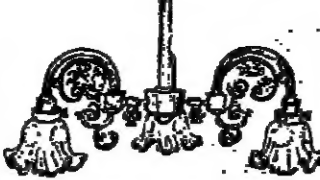
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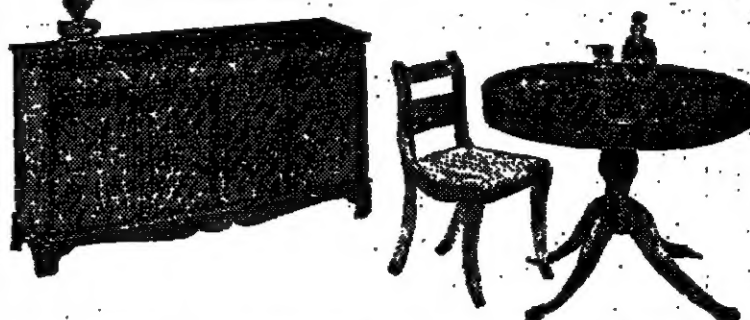
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When it comes to spring cleaning, the volume that I take as guide and friend is *The Kenya Settlers' Cookery Book and Household Guide*, circa 1958. It now reads like a cross between first edition Mrs Beeton and one of those booklets of peculiarly ill-chosen foreign phrases you can pick up on the newsstands nearest the boat train platform at Victoria. But every now and again I turn to it and find a remedy that is entirely apposite. Thus: "Decanters which have been stained with wine can be made quite clean if a little coarse salt and vinegar is used. Shake well and rinse in cold water". That works. So does the remedy for tired tapestry (rub well with warm bran).



A selection of pinnies from Dickens & Jones with a rush brush from John Lewis, price £1.95

On the heavier aspects of housework, however, it's obvious that the book was put together for a time and in a place in which labour—other people's labour—came not merely cheap but also willing. "Kwanza fanya kazi hii halafu fanya ingine", it says: when you've finished that work set on with something else. That is not a phrase that comes readily to the lips in Britain in 1977. Well, for the lack of the general factotum which it assumes, what is each of us to do about the occasional Big Clean?

There is one easy answer: call in the professionals. A hunt through your local Yellow Pages should produce a number of firms who will come in, take your living quarters apart, dust them down and put them together again: and their services are not necessarily as expensive as you might think. Thus Cleaningwise (01-789 2133), which serves most of the London area and parts of the home counties, might charge you as much as £200 for taking a mansion to pieces, but as little as £20 for cleaning up the average flat: it all depends on the size and difficulty of the job. In each case, though, they reckon to be in and out within a working day. But there are still supplementary services you need to arrange for yourself.

For chimney sweeps the right hunting ground is the Yellow Pages. In the London area prices vary between £2.50 and £4 for an open chimney, and boilers cost around £3. Getting a chimney done will take upwards of half an hour, but I do advise you to get it now if you want it done this spring: from the middle of April, it seems, everyone has the same idea.

The cheapest, least effective and most wearisome way of cleaning a carpet is to do it yourself. I think that calling in the experts is a much more satisfactory method of procedure, and in the case of Oriental rugs it's absolutely essential: ill-applied home cleaners can do a lot of damage. A firm like the Patent Steam Carpet Company (01 874 4333) will clean your Axminster or Wilton on site for 51p a square yard (70p a square yard if you have it collected and taken into their factory), while Chinese and Persian carpets cost £2 a square yard on site (with a minimum charge of £12), and £2 a square yard if you send them in. The firm collects and delivers throughout the London area, and a carpet cleaned in their factory is likely to be away for about a fortnight. Behar Profex (01-226 0144), which specialises in cleaning antique Oriental rugs, takes about a week over it, collects and delivers throughout the UK, and charges according to the scale of the problem—assume upwards of £5 for a small rug.

The right way of tackling curtains, again, is going to depend on how much you spent on them in the first place: but if you want to be certain they emerge from the process in better order than they started in, then a firm which will guarantee its work is the answer. One such is University Tailors (01-735 7711), which will collect and deliver in London and the major centres in the South-east. Cleaning—which will take a week—is likely to cost between 50p a square metre for unlined curtains and £1.02 a square metre for very heavy interlined brocade. Taur Steam, which in addition to a London presence (01-580 5457) has branches in Glasgow and Leeds, is starting an on-site curtain service soon and already does carpets on site. Carpet cleaning costs from a minimum of £15, and remember to allow 24 hours for things to dry out.

With upholstery, professional cleaning on site is likely to cost between £14 and £34 for a three-piece suite—but from the Servicemaster, which has branches throughout the South-east, normally send a representative to give an estimate. Servicemaster will clean leather



## Getting a touch of professional polish

and vinyl as well as fabric covered furniture. The cost of cleaning and mending blinds varies according to their size; but since it is pretty modest, assume that you will either have to provide a fair amount of work or be prepared to make your own deliveries and collections. There's no such problem, however, with duvets: you can send them in by post to the Danish Express Laundry (16 Hinde Street, London W1; telephone 01-935 6306), who will charge you £2.60 plus VAT for a single, £3 plus VAT for a double, and £5 plus VAT for a very big one. Don't forget to include the postage for their return. If you happen to live within the orbit of University Tailors, they will collect and deliver them, charging you £2.20 for a single, £3.50 for a double, and keeping them for one to two weeks. They do strongly advise, though, that you hang them out in the open after their return, to get rid of the last of the fumes.

Unless, of course, you took the line of least resistance from the start, and called on the experts to give you a package deal, none of this relieves you of the dirty work. The dirty work? Yes: the Hoovering (the work? Yes: the Hoovering) is the dirtiest I've seen in a long time, but heavens, at about £99.50, what a price! The dusting (I suppose it's a dreadful revelation of character that I don't mind paying £1.10 for a feather duster in Dickens & Jones, or fabric-lined PVC gloves, at £2.75 for those who can't stand the feel of rubber or plastic but need something waterproof) and very little else. I

is selling the light and stable Abru brand at between £6.80 and £13.80, depending on height), or the window cleaning (Debenhams has. Let their telescopic cleaners at £2.95: invaluable). Dressing for all this calls for some thought, but it seems to me that there are three possibilities. First, if there is some one to impress, a pinstriped suit to receive their sympathy and admiration at the beginning or end of the proceedings is essential. Dickens & Jones has some suitably frilly, flowery full-length ones for lady cleaners, at £5.95; but House of Fraser doesn't go in for central buying, so obtaining one of those might mean a trip to town. John Lewis, however, does: and they have much the same sort of thing, with fewer frills and more fragile flowers, at £4.75. And there are any number of the unisex plasticized aprons with cheerful product advertising around: I particularly liked the inexpressible alcoholic ones (Guinness on a radiant orange background) selling at £2.25 in Debenhams.

However, when it comes to doing the actual work pinnies—frilly or otherwise—are just an encumbrance. I reckon the choice is between maximum protection with, say, dungarees, or the opposite, I personally favour the latter course. I go for effective protection of hair (shower caps or swimming caps) and hands (John Lewis has some inelegant but serviceable white cotton gloves at 49p, or fabric-lined PVC gloves, at 62p, for those who can't stand the feel of rubber or plastic but need something waterproof) and very little else. I

work on the principle that, dressed either way, the business is going to be followed by a long hot bath (preferably accompanied by copious bath salts, soothing music, a Hornblower story and a good stiff scotch and soda): and if I'm wearing dungarees I've got to wash them too. I mean, the whole thing can assume a time-scale like the handpainted of the Fourth Birdie.

In fact there are some people who like it that way. My sister is one: she'll work methodically through the year, from room to room, from cupboards to cooker, in a way which compels my admiration and horror in about equal proportions. For myself, I'm all in favour of a brisk set-to and then forget it—the first place: with dirt, like sickness, prevention is a great deal better than cure. I have in fact been known to paint the inside of my cooker with a soda bicarbonate solution to ease the cleaning next time: and it worked, too.

A. M. Gleeson



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